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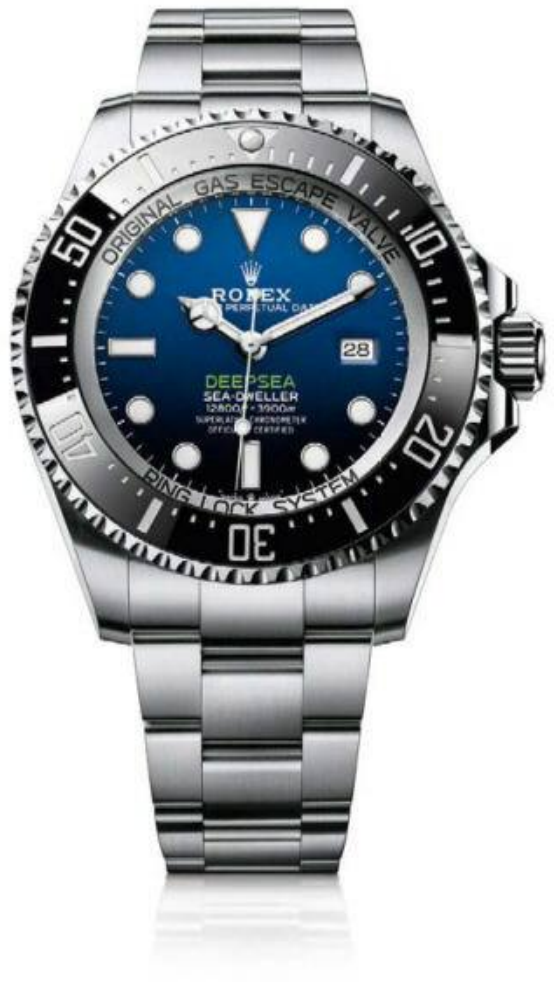

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NEERAJ CHOPRA

An inspiration for the ages, the 23-year-old has captured the nation's imagination like no athlete before him.

PHOTOGRAPH BY **MANASI SAWANT**

JACKET AND KURTA BY **ANTAR-AGNI.**

Pg. 146

ON NEERAJ CHOPRA: BANDHGALA AND BROOCHES BY **S&N BY SHANTANU & NIKHIL**.

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"I love the unconditional decadence of velvet. It has a sense of mystery, a lazy languid charm and the ability to transport you back in time."

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Pg.
162

ON TOM:
SHIRT AND BOOTS BY **SAINT LAURENT BY ANTHONY VACCARELLO.** TROUSERS BY **AMIRI.** NECKLACE BY **BERNARD JAMES.** BELT BY **ANDERSON'S.**

ON THE COVER

TOM HOLLAND

He has honoured the role of Spider-Man so completely that he might have actually become bigger than Spider-Man.

PHOTOGRAPH BY **SHARIF HAMZA**

SUIT AND TURTLENECK BY **GUCCI.** BELT BY **W. KLEINBERG.** WATCH BY **TAG HEUER.**

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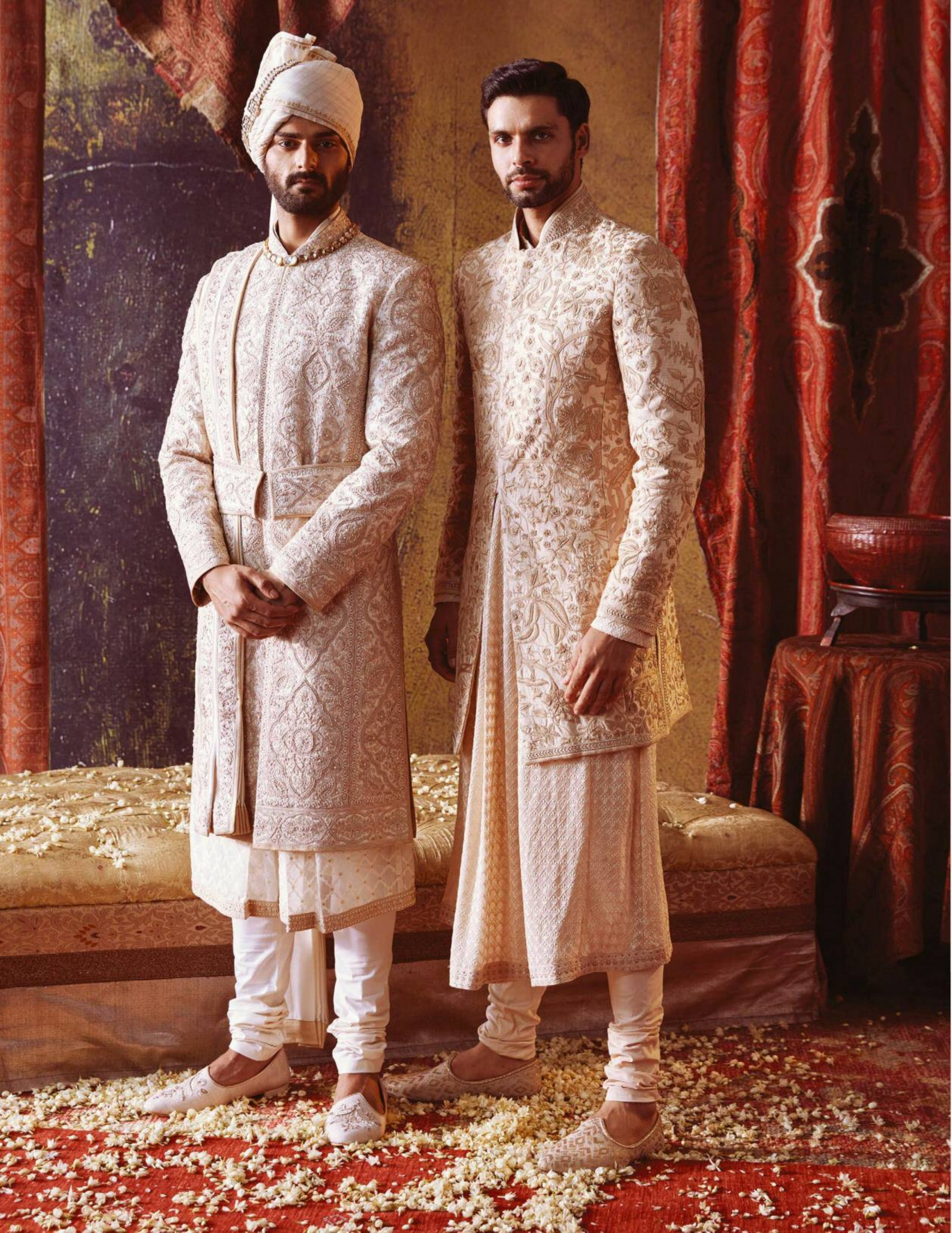

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VICKY KAUSHAL
A stickler for perfection, he is that rare combination: an actor and a star.

PHOTOGRAPH BY **MANASI SAWANT**

TURTLENECK BY **Z ZEGNA.** TROUSERS BY **ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA.** WATCH BY **RADO.**

Pg. 158

ON VICKY: SHIRT AND TROUSERS BY **DIOR MEN.**

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PHOTOGRAPH BY **THE HOUSE OF PIXELS**

BLAZER AND SHIRT BY **AMIT AGGARWAL.**

Pg. 128

ON AYUSHMANN: JACKET AND SHIRT BY **HERMÈS.** WATCH BY **DANIEL WELLINGTON.**

PHOTO: THE HOUSE OF PIXELS.

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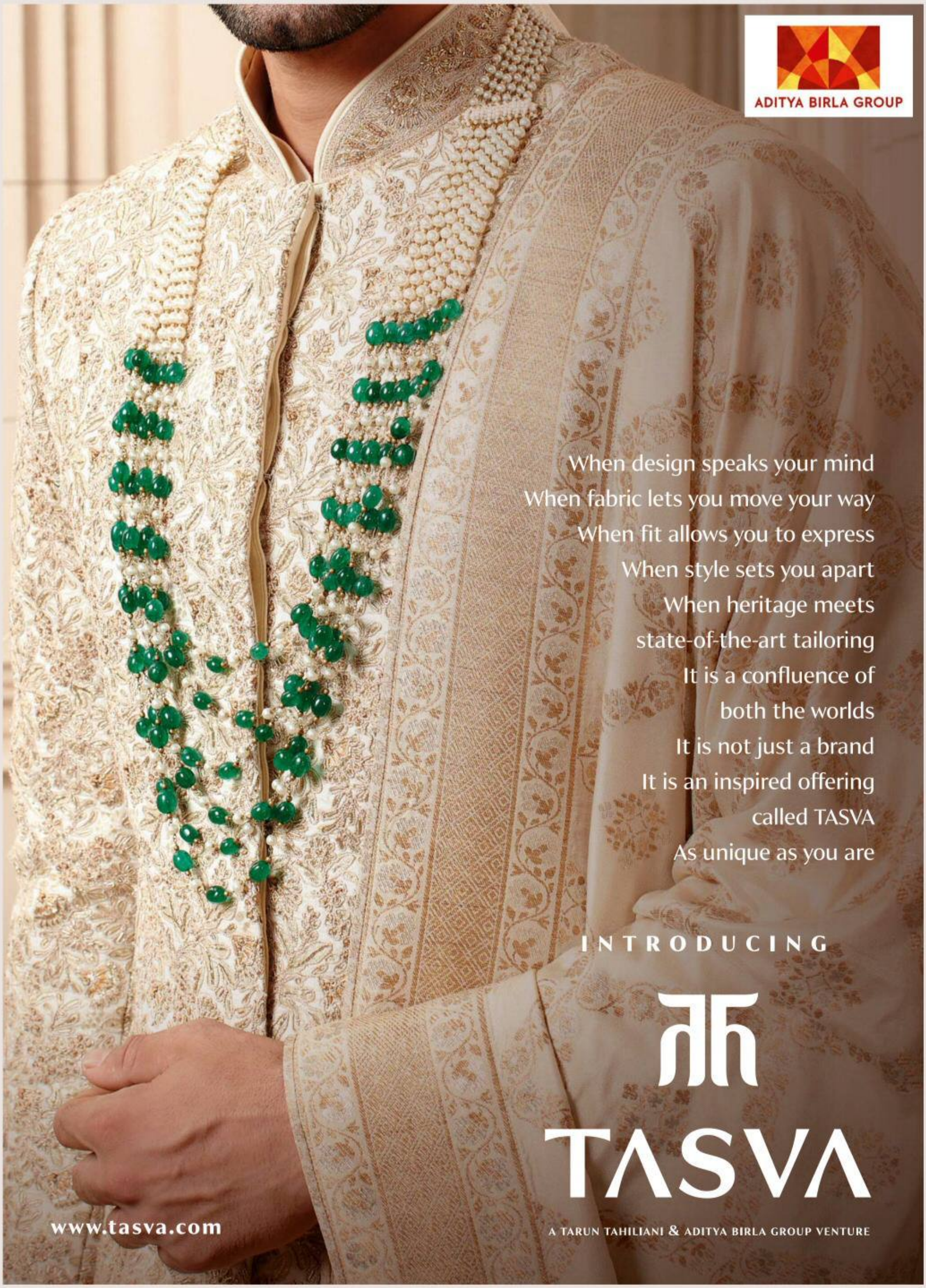

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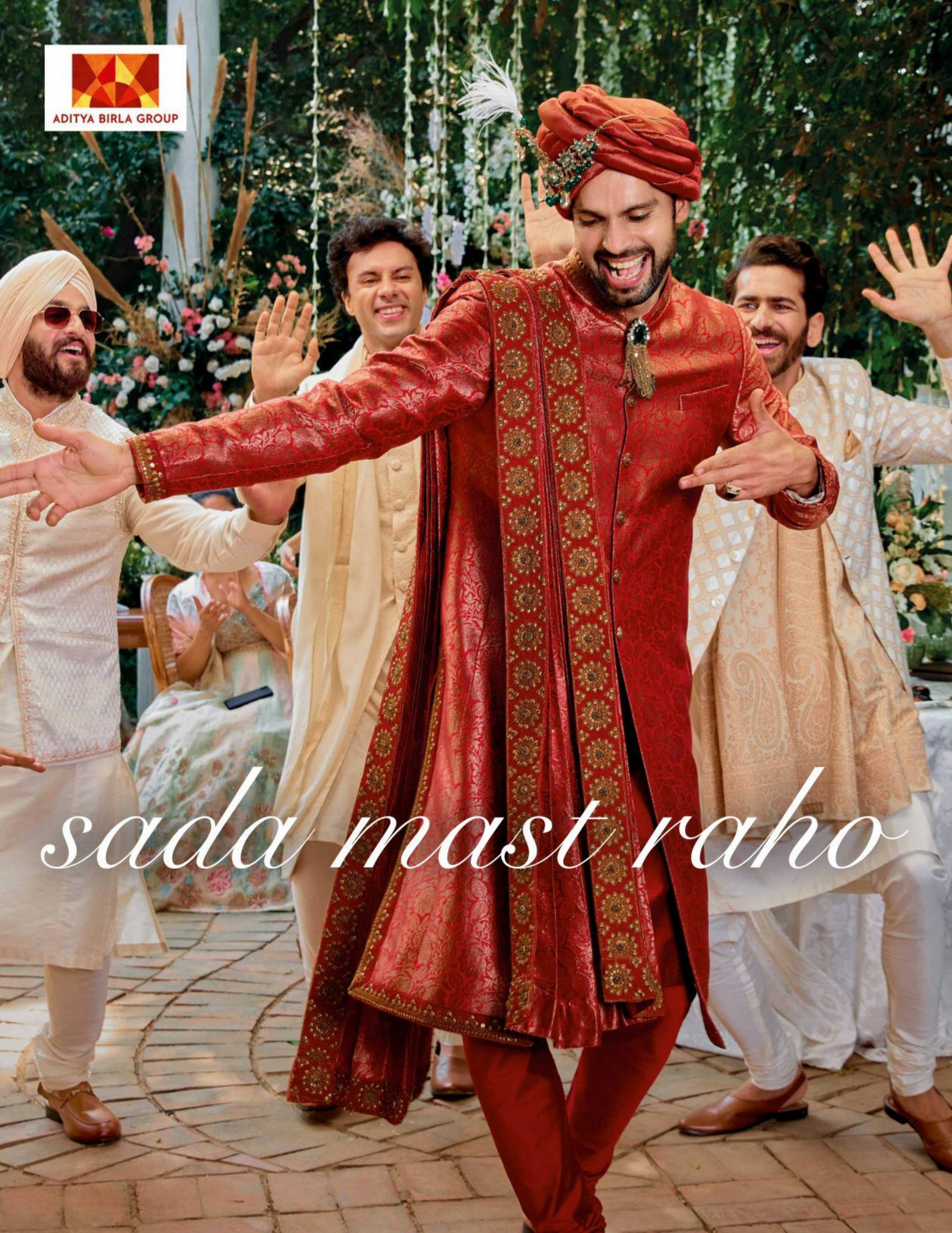
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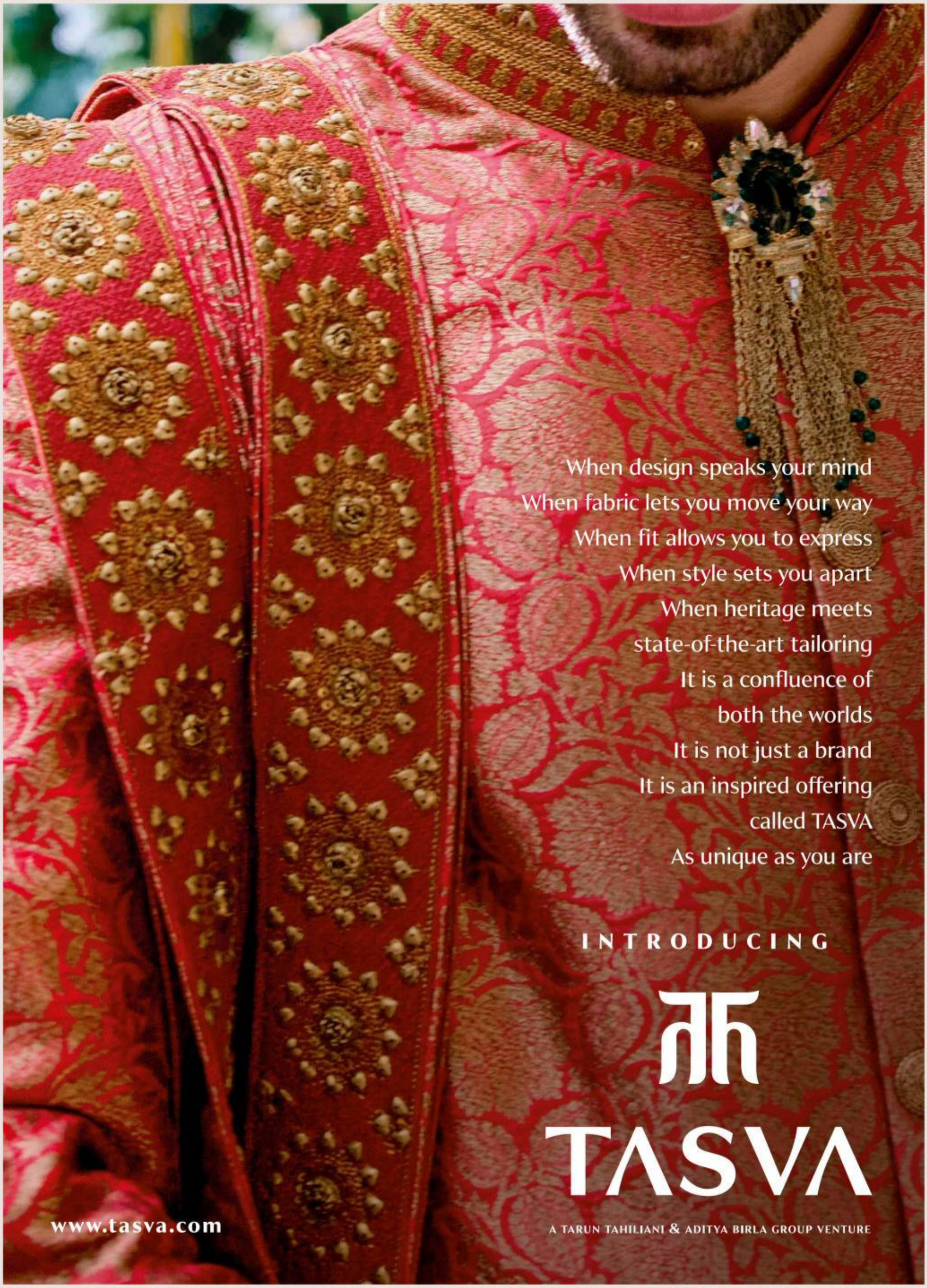

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GIANNIS ANTETOKOUNMPO
His fairy-tale rise made him a sensation. But now, he's becoming something more like a legend.

PHOTOGRAPH BY **ARNAUD PYVKA**

SHIRT BY **DIOR MEN.** SUNGLASSES BY **BOTTEGA VENETA.** HIS OWN WATCH BY **ROLEX.** HIS OWN NECKLACE.

Pg. 142

ON TAAPSEE PANNU: DRESS BY **LOUIS VUITTON.**

PHOTO: MANASI SAWANT.

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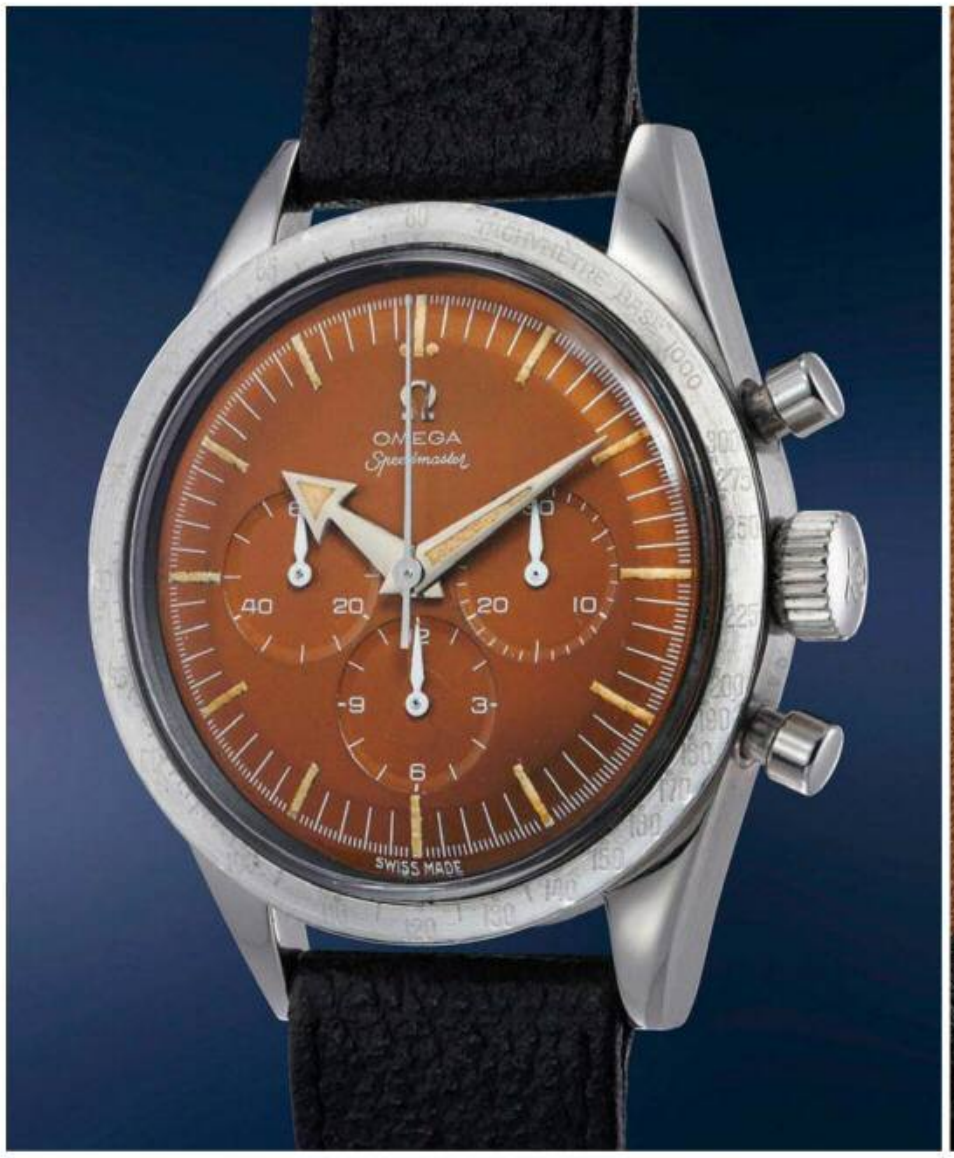
THE HOLY GRAIL

Recently sold at a world record price, the OMEGA Speedmaster is a horological wonder that demonstrates the Swiss luxury watchmaker's savoir-faire and unparalleled craftsmanship

Without a doubt, the wristwatch has been a priority in the ensemble of the most stylish people – a fine timepiece is undeniably the keystone of any watch-wardrobe. Aside from their evident practicality, watches have always been purchased for reasons beyond telling time – their beauty, prestige, and a genuine passion for craftsmanship and horology makes them no different than aspirational, luxury items to own and adorn. Furthermore, they've cemented their value as precious items that reveal resilience and self-worth.

Of course, watches are more than just machines that tell the time – they're statements of personal identity, taste and status that reveal a deeper understanding and appreciation for traditional craftsmanship. In a digital world inclined towards the next best thing, watches are a sophisticated rarity, a luxury product designed to last. One such timepiece is the Omega Speedmaster CK2915-1, which recently sold for a world record price of CHF 3,115,500 at the Phillips Auction House in Geneva.



With an illustrious history that dates back to 1957, the iconic OMEGA Speedmaster debuted with two other companions – the Seamaster 300 and Railmaster – as part of a 'Trilogy' of professional watches. Revealing impeccable mechanics, OMEGA watches with the reference CK2915 were only made between 1957-1959, and produced in just three different iterations, making the record-breaker one of the very first and most collectible Speedmaster models. No wonder then, that the striking timepiece sold for the handsome price of CHF 3,115,500, far exceeding the estimated auction price of 80,000 to 120,000 Swiss Francs.

Interestingly, OMEGA collectibles are usually stored safely in the dark for decades, but the Speedmaster is anything but conformist. The iconic timepiece has lived a full, active life, often in sunlight which resulted in a unique, tropical dial that has aged to a rich and vibrant milk-chocolate hue. Not only is the hue deep and vivid, but it is also even throughout – making this legendary timepiece even more aesthetically pleasing. The dial and hands have been aged at the same pace, lending the luminous display an attractive gold tone that elevates its status from iconic to regal. This uniformity of colour also confirms the watch has not undergone any disruptive servicing.

Dubbed as 'the grail' by collectors and watch connoisseurs alike, the first generational model – CK2915 – was the first chronograph to feature a tachymeter scale on the bezel, rather than the dial and is also the first Speedmaster to draw its power from the mighty Calibre 321 which demonstrates robust and reliable movement. Sure enough, the OMEGA Speedmaster does boast a charming old-world elegance with a lasting appeal, which not only makes it a collectors' item, but also a symbolic heirloom.

For more information, visit omegawatches.com

OMEGA

GQ MEN OF THE YEAR AWARDS
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Year of the Brave

Welcome to *GQ*'s flagship Men of the Year Awards issue, which celebrates feats of incredible achievement and bravery through this most challenging year. The 13th edition of these awards, brought to you in partnership with Chivas, are a marker of some of the most impressive accomplishments of 2021. Despite the challenges wrought by the pandemic, our winners mounted podiums, pushed boundaries, and affected change. They inspired and led. Whether it was Neeraj Chopra's Herculean effort, hurling his javelin into the distance on that humid Tokyo night; 34-year-old Chaitanya Tamhane's searing vision that allowed him to tell the most local, human story that transcended borders and cultures; or Test cricket legend Cheteshwar Pujara—often unfairly judged for plodding along—taking body blows and blunting a menacing pace attack to ensure India won a hypnotic Test series in Australia at the beginning of 2021.

Apart from the power-packed MOTY portfolio, this issue also contains a range of stories that spotlight the best of the *GQ* universe: a global Fashion Awards special (Accessories of the Year: Pearls); the best celebrity style looks of the year (my favourite was Daniel Craig's cranberry velvet tux at the Bond premiere); the best designers and brands from which to purchase bonafide one-of-a-kind bespoke menswear across India; the cars to look forward to in 2022; and the most drool-worthy watches on the planet. We also have a feature that explores the meteoric rise of regional Indian cinema over the past year, with movies from Kerala and Tamil Nadu riding the wave of streaming platforms, finding large audiences far outside their traditional territories. Today, the reclusive Malayali actor Fahadh Faasil has a burgeoning pan-India appeal, a sign of things to come. As we step into a new year, there's much to look forward to.

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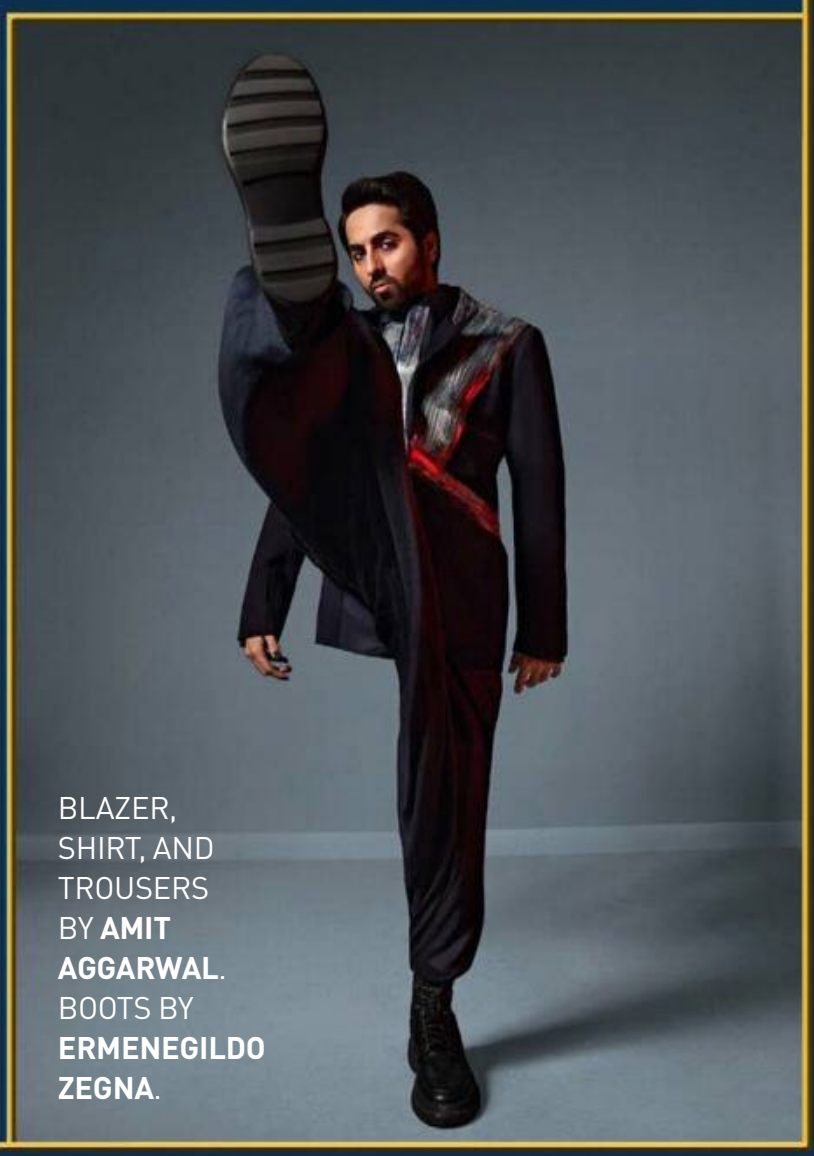

BLAZER, SHIRT, AND TROUSERS BY **AMIT AGGARWAL**. BOOTS BY **ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA**.

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In their sixth successive year, India Art Fair and BMW Group present an ode to the true spirit of art, in a more inclusive world

If you ever find yourself scouting around for masterpieces born of passion, look no further than the India Art Fair. A celebration of modern and contemporary art from South Asia, India Art Fair – in association with creative genius and culture maven BMW Group – is a leading platform for intriguing new discoveries and revolutionary works of art. This highly-anticipated event unfolds in grand style each year in New Delhi, in association with BMW Group.

For five long years, the India Art Fair and BMW Group have come together to promote cultural engagement across the country. The result? Five stupendous art fairs that witnessed a seamless confluence of art and car. And now, as the world picks itself up after a pandemic, it's time to celebrate the fair and BMW Group's six-year-long association, with India Art Fair 2022, slated to take place from 3-6 February, 2022.

CULTURAL CREATIVITY

Ever since its inception, the BMW Group has championed and engaged in diverse cultural co-operations the world over. From commissioning legendary BMW Art Cars to spearheading other initiatives like the BMW Tate Live, the group has always been committed to excellence. So much so that the iconic BMW Art Cars by Andy Warhol, Jeff Koons, Sandro Chia and Cesar Manrique have been exclusively showcased at several editions of the India Art Fair.

Over the years, the India Art Fair and BMW Group have offered a real treat to cultural explorers and art aficionados alike. For instance, they worked with artists to create a series of 'BMW Artist Films'. Whether it is New Delhi artist and archivist Baaraan Ijlal's fascinating study of her city or artist Dia Mehhta Bhupal's reconstruction of the spaces most familiar to us, this series shone the spotlight on some of India's most gifted contemporary artists. Moreover, the annual BMW Art Talk – the inaugural talk in the fair's auditorium each year – became another event to look forward to. These talks spotlight the artist who painted or designed the BMW Art Car on display, such as The Hockney Talk and The Warhol Talk, which were previously conducted in 2019 and 2020, respectively.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The year 2022 will witness the return of India Art Fair and BMW Group in the wake of the pandemic, which brought along some major social shifts for the world. With this new edition, India Art Fair and BMW Group are set to focus on a more sustainable and inclusive future, with the first-ever 'The Future is Born of Art' commission. Intrigued? You should be.

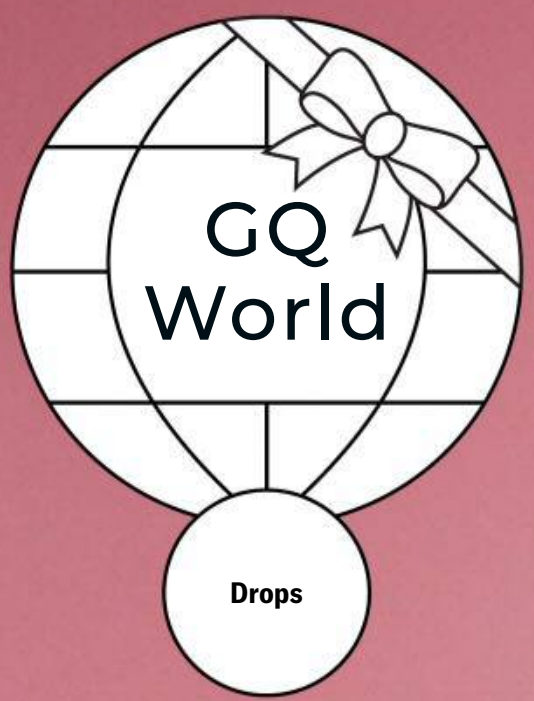
'The Future is Born of Art' commission seeks an artist to design a creative BMW car wrap. Not just any car wrap, at that. BMW stresses upon every artist's wrap being as sustainable as possible. This stems from the brand's ideology of 'Sustainable Circularity', where reusing and recycling are the norm.

The winner will be chosen from a shortlist prepared by a jury and decided in-part through a public poll. Better still, the car – a fully electronic vehicle – will be unveiled at the fair and will traverse the country, decked in the winning artist's wrap, thereby splendidly broadcasting their vision. This new initiative is an effort to re-inforce BMW's core beliefs in creativity, sustainability and innovation. It further ensures the engagement of artists with BMW's eco-creations, to promote a cleaner, greener world.

Needless to say, the winning artist, along with three runner-ups, will score some generous rewards. While all participants will be featured in an editorial piece on India Art Fair Stories, the winner will be covered in an exclusive editorial and a film produced by India Art Fair, which may even be screened at the fair.

Whether it is illuminating talks by leading artists or novel, thought-provoking initiatives like the 'The Future is Born of Art' commission, India Art Fair 2022 aims to be a diverse and inclusive platform that embraces the very best of South Asian art.

For more information, visit indiaartfair.in



42 Chart-Topping Gift Ideas

L.V. ESSENTIALS
The Kid Laroi doesn't go anywhere without a pair of Louis Vuitton shades—because Virgil Abloh has an undeniable knack for turning wardrobe building blocks into holy grails.

SHIRT, PANTS, SNEAKERS, AND HIS OWN SUNGLASSES BY **LOUIS VUITTON MEN'S.** T-SHIRT BY **CALVIN KLEIN UNDERWEAR.**

Starring the Kid Laroi and a mountain of certified-platinum holiday drops.

BY **SAMUEL HINE**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **MARTIN BROWN**
STYLED BY **JON TIETZ**

HAIR: LEDORA FRANCIS USING ORIBE. SKIN: ANDREW COLVIN AT SAINT LUKE USING CHANEL. TAILORING: SAMANTHA MCELRATH AT CAROL AI STUDIO.

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EXOTIC CANDLE
Every **Celine** scent is based on Hedi Slimane's olfactory journal of personal memories. The Nightclubbing candle, naturally, is reminiscent of smoky nocturnal parties at Paris's Les Bains Douches.

FRESH DRESSING ROBE
For a rare collaboration, Savile Row mainstay **Anderson & Sheppard** called someone they knew well: super-stylist (and loyal A&S client) George Cortina, who lent his French Riviera sensibility to a line of poplin sleepwear.

COUTURE CHAIR
When he founded his famous couture house, Christian Dior chose the now iconic Medallion chair to furnish his atelier. Here, it's reinterpreted by Iranian-French designer India Mahdavi (for **Dior Maison**), whose colourful interiors kicked off the millennial pink craze in 2014.

SUPER LOAFERS
Japanese style icon Poggy tapped NYC artist Eric Haze to design a custom pair of **Jimmy Choo** loafers, proving that when it comes to collabs, the more, the merrier.

A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP
Get first-class rest even when you're stuck in coach with **Gucci**'s inflatable silk neck pillow. And don't miss the matching slippers.

CLIMBING CORDS
An avid rock climber, **Brain Dead**'s Kyle Ng put his SoCal spin on the classic corduroy climbing pants with a groovy bleached dye job.

FLASHY WALLET
In **Prada**'s esoteric universe, the chain wallet of your youth is reborn with silver leather and a bolo-tie-like clasp.

TRIPPY TOTE BAG
After more than a hundred collections, **Dries Van Noten** is still one of the best in the business at crafting sneakily compelling accessories—like this leather tote—that you'll find yourself using for a lifetime.

WILLY WONKA VASES
Designed by Enzo Mari, the Lezioni vase (available at **MoMA Design Store**) is handmade of resin in Italy—meaning it will never break—and no two are alike.

PRADA, DRIES VAN NOTEN, GUCCI, CELINE BY HEDI SLIMANE, MOMA DESIGN STORE, GEORGE CORTINA FOR ANDERSON & SHEPPARD; MARTIN BROWN (PHOTOS); SHARON RYAN FOR HALLEY RESOURCES (PROP STYLIST). ALL OTHER PHOTOS COURTESY OF BRANDS.

For further details please contact Baccarose on 022-22817766 or E-mail: versace@baccarose.com

Man at Work

Almost two years ago, Charlton Kenneth Jeffrey Howard, a rapper from Australia, knew he had made it big when he received a surprise Instagram DM from an admirer.

The message was from Justin Bieber.

"He said, 'You got the sauce,'" says Howard, better known as the Kid Laroi, scrolling through his phone to show me the exchange.

He pulled his stage name from the Australian Kamilaroi people: His mother is of Indigenous descent. When he was younger, Laroi would record verses on her iPhone and post them on Soundcloud and Facebook. At 14, he was crowned one of the country's best high-school artists on a competition show called *Unearthed High.* A record deal followed, which put him in a position to catch the attention of a certain Canadian megastar.

The next time he heard from Bieber, Laroi was in the shower when he got a FaceTime call. Intuitively, he jumped out to answer, still sopping wet. That call led to a series of collaborations, including "Unstable", which appeared on Bieber's 2021 album *Justice,* and the Kid Laroi's own "Stay", which became the biggest pop song in the world. At just 2 minutes and 21 seconds, the song dominated the global Billboard charts all summer long—a frantic pop ballad in which Laroi croons about longing and self-sabotage: "I feel like you can't feel the way I feel / Oh, I'll be fucked up if you can't be right here."

These days he's living in Los Angeles, enjoying the perks of overnight stardom: He bought a mansion in Beverly Hills. Mostly, though, he prefers to keep it low-key, spending his free time at home with his model-girlfriend, Katarina Deme. He's met lots of interesting people since moving to town, including one of his musical heroes, Drake. "He just came to me at a restaurant and said, 'Man, I'm proud of you,'" remembers Laroi. "'Keep going. I'm watching your shit.'" And with that, the Kid Laroi opens his phone to check his DMs.

—WILLA BENNETT

THE NEW BLACK-TIE
Show up correct on the holiday party circuit with Versace's subtle black wool tailoring—and unsubtle gold-laced necktie.

COAT, SHIRT, PANTS, SHOES, AND TIE BY **VERSACE.**

FLAUNTY NAIL POLISH
Unleash your inner rock star (or TikTok star) with **Chrome Hearts'** glammed-out shades of scented (yes, scented!) nail lacquer.

HAIR: LEDORA FRANCIS USING ORIBE. SKIN: ANDREW COLVIN AT SAINT LUKE USING CHANEL. TAILORING: SAMANTHA MCELRATH AT CAROL AI STUDIO. CHROME HEARTS: MARTIN BROWN (PHOTO); SHARON RYAN FOR HALLEY RESOURCES (PROP STYLIST).

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Debuted in a Justin Bieber campaign, the leather-free **Balenciaga** Runner is the latest surreal smash-hit sneaker from the smartest house in fashion.

A DIVER FIT FOR SAILING

With its entry-level price and ultra-legit mechanical movement, the **Seiko** 5 has a cult following in the watch world. Given the preppy **Rowing Blazers** treatment, the beloved timepiece is even more covetable.

THE BIRKIN OF SPEAKERS

This speaker set sounds as good as it looks—for a rare foray into tech, **Hermès** didn't compromise on its legendary leatherwork .

HANDMADE LAMP

Can't decide on a new ceramic vase or a handsome accent lamp? Barcelona artist **Marta Bonilla** cleverly combines the two with a hand-built base and an artisanal raffia shade.

PERFECT PINK PUFFER

The **Moncler** Genius programme gives designers like **Palm Angels**' Francesco Ragazzi the keys to the storied outerwear house. The results—like this dusty-pink puffer with suede detailing—speak for themselves.

CROCHET LOGO POUCH

Givenchy creative director Matthew Williams might be known for his work with leather and metal hardware, but this season he used humble crochet to create a bona fide It bag—or pouch.

THE FERRARI OF PENS

Montblanc and F1 tire manufacturers **Pirelli** share a fanatical devotion to testing and innovation, so naturally their limited-edition collaborative writing instrument has been manufactured with supercar levels of precision.

ITALIAN-MADE HIKERS

Two iconic Italian brands, **Ermenegildo Zegna** and **La Sportiva**, joined forces to create a hiking boot equally at home on the streets of Milan and the trails of the Alps.

COFFEE-TABLE CENTREPIECE

Because you can't fit **Tom Ford**'s legacy in one book, the designer's second monograph (published by Rizzoli) chronicles his post-Gucci career through 416 pages of images (many previously unpublished) and personal commentary.

HERITAGE-PIN PLATE

Saint Laurent is synonymous with French savoir faire, so when Anthony Vaccarello introduced a line of ceramics he naturally did so with **Emaux de Longwy**, the historic faience maker established in 1798.

ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA X LA SPORTIVA, BALENCIAGA, MONCLER X PALM ANGELS, SEIKO X ROWING BLAZERS, SAINT LAURENT, MONTBLANC, HÈRMES, AND GIVENCHY: MARTIN BROWN (PHOTOS); SHARON RYAN FOR HALLEY RESOURCES (PROP STYLIST). ALL OTHER PHOTOS COURTESY OF BRANDS.

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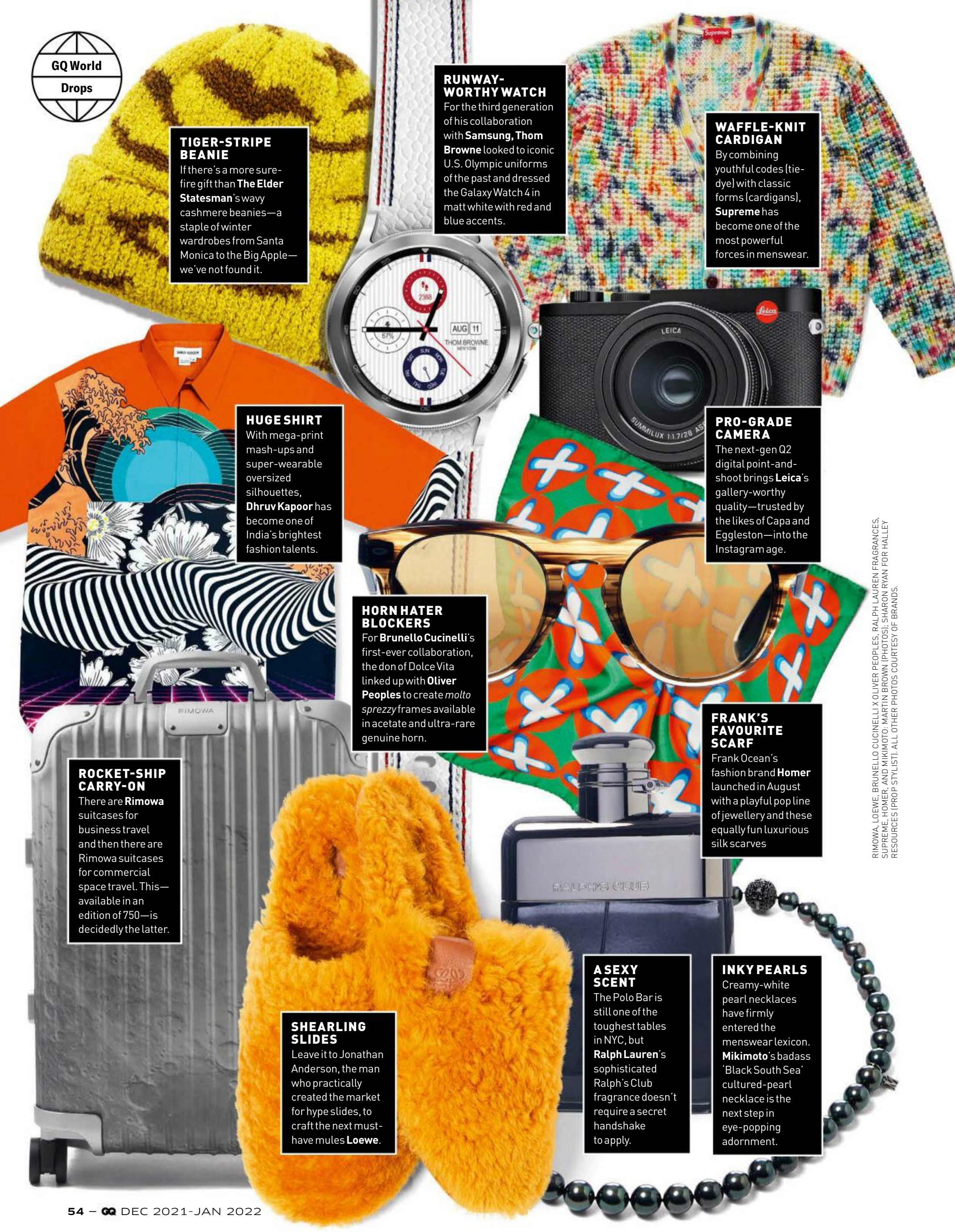

TIGER-STRIPE BEANIE

If there's a more sure-fire gift than **The Elder Statesman**'s wavy cashmere beanies—a staple of winter wardrobes from Santa Monica to the Big Apple—we've not found it.

RUNWAY-WORTHY WATCH

For the third generation of his collaboration with **Samsung, Thom Browne** looked to iconic U.S. Olympic uniforms of the past and dressed the Galaxy Watch 4 in matt white with red and blue accents.

WAFFLE-KNIT CARDIGAN

By combining youthful codes (tie-dye) with classic forms (cardigans), **Supreme** has become one of the most powerful forces in menswear.

HUGE SHIRT

With mega-print mash-ups and super-wearable oversized silhouettes, **Dhruv Kapoor** has become one of India's brightest fashion talents.

PRO-GRADE CAMERA

The next-gen Q2 digital point-and-shoot brings **Leica**'s gallery-worthy quality—trusted by the likes of Capa and Eggleston—into the Instagram age.

HORN HATER BLOCKERS

For **Brunello Cucinelli**'s first-ever collaboration, the don of Dolce Vita linked up with **Oliver Peoples** to create *molto sprezzy* frames available in acetate and ultra-rare genuine horn.

FRANK'S FAVOURITE SCARF

Frank Ocean's fashion brand **Homer** launched in August with a playful pop line of jewellery and these equally fun luxurious silk scarves

ROCKET-SHIP CARRY-ON

There are **Rimowa** suitcases for business travel and then there are Rimowa suitcases for commercial space travel. This—available in an edition of 750—is decidedly the latter.

SHEARLING SLIDES

Leave it to Jonathan Anderson, the man who practically created the market for hype slides, to craft the next must-have mules **Loewe**.

A SEXY SCENT

The Polo Bar is still one of the toughest tables in NYC, but **Ralph Lauren**'s sophisticated Ralph's Club fragrance doesn't require a secret handshake to apply.

INKY PEARLS

Creamy-white pearl necklaces have firmly entered the menswear lexicon. **Mikimoto**'s badass 'Black South Sea' cultured-pearl necklace is the next step in eye-popping adornment.

RIMOWA, LOEWE, BRUNELLO CUCINELLI X OLIVER PEOPLES, RALPH LAUREN FRAGRANCES, SUPREME, HOMER, AND MIKIMOTO: MARTIN BROWN (PHOTOS); SHARON RYAN FOR HALLEY RESOURCES (PROP STYLIST). ALL OTHER PHOTOS COURTESY OF BRANDS.

SCULPTORS OF SEAMLESS PERFECTION

Taking a legacy of 40 years ahead, the father - son duo, Mr. Sunil and Sushain Mital have been re-defining bespoke tailoring since the inception of their brand "The Darzi Group". Paying intricate attention to cuts and correct fits, their legacy goes strong in the menswear niche.

STUDIO FIRANG

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GEAR UP FOR THE FUTURE

With its global vision and smart innovations, Hyundai is moving Beyond Mobility, to deliver exhilarating driving experiences in a more eco-positive world

Today, everything around us seems to be changing and evolving. From the smartphones we use to the cars we drive, everything is undergoing swift transformations, for the better. Simply put, innovation is everywhere. And rightly so, as Hyundai believes. As a brand that's constantly raising the bar of automotive performance and design, Hyundai recognises that we stand at the cusp of great progress — and it's beyond ready to usher in this newer, more advanced future.

Hyundai India has seen a great many victories along a span of 25 long and successful years. Its fleet of cars offers the widest range of transmissions, fuel options and ground-breaking features, making each vehicle a delight to drive. However, product excellence is not the only thing that they bring to the table. Hyundai now aims to provide enriching quality experiences to its customers, all so that they can get the most out of the precious time spent in their cars. Think intuitive features, better means to stay connected on-the-go and terrific technological advances that are equally sustainable.

To ring in this new era of innovation, Hyundai is all set to deliver new experiences that match up to its core beliefs — superlative quality, excellent designs and groundbreaking technology. All of this, while ensuring an effective and efficient utilisation of the planet's resources.

INTELLIGENT EXPERIENCES

With a large chunk of our time now spent travelling to and from work or between quick weekend getaways, cars are fast becoming our second homes. With no time to spare, it becomes increasingly difficult to squeeze in some quality time with friends and family. It's imperative then, for our vehicles to enrich our lives through interactive technological advances that bring both comfort and joy. And this is

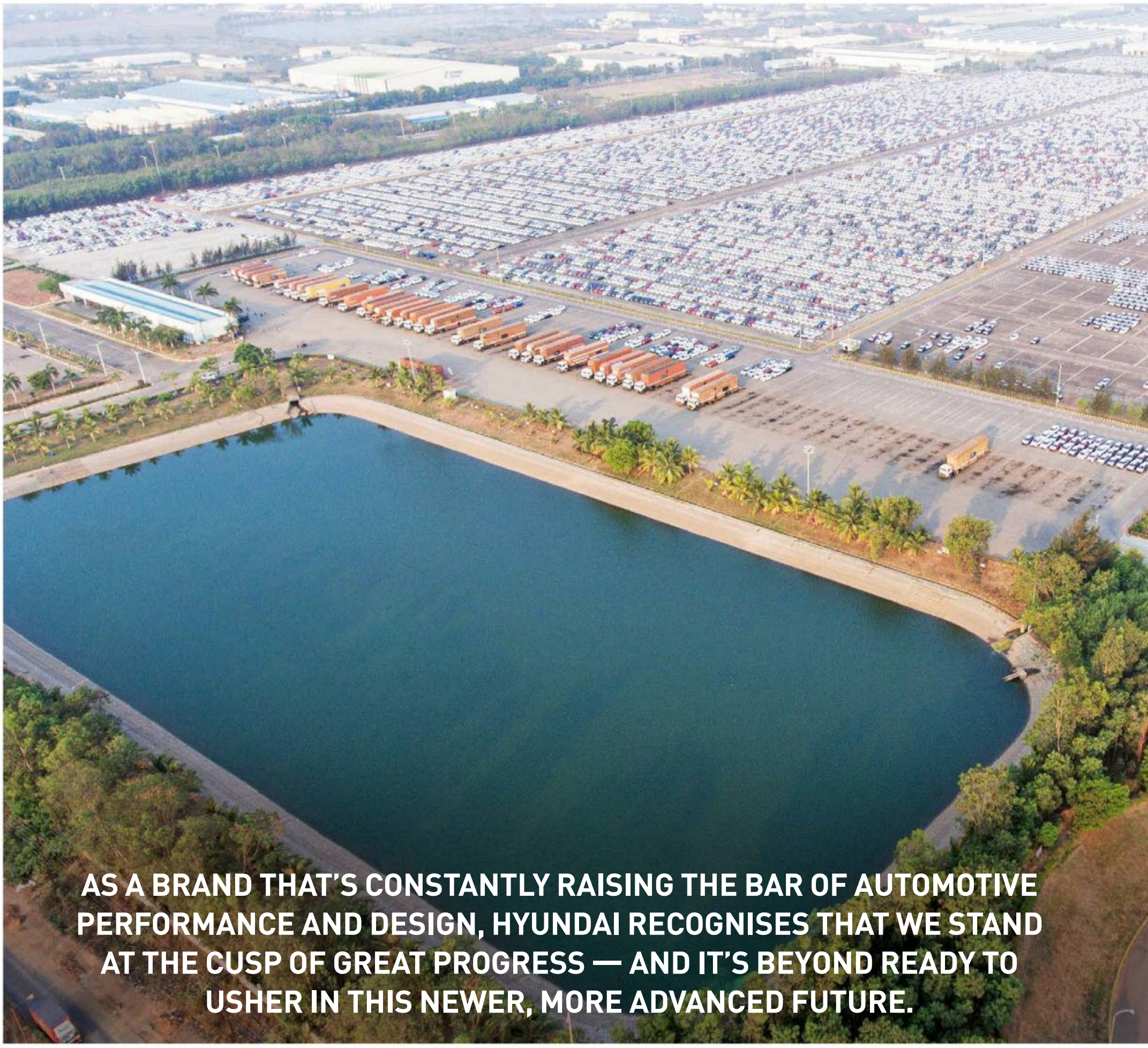
THINK SMART.
THINK ECO-POSITIVE.
THINK HYUNDAI.

what Hyundai promises – to connect everyone with 'Quality Time'.

To help you stay connected on the road, Hyundai is currently developing effective new technologies that are not merely intelligent, but also ready for the future. For instance, the brand's Blue Link technology enables you to spend 'Quality Time' with your loved ones by staying connected as you dash between meetings. While this technology already performs multiple other functions including navigation and safety, it's getting all spruced up for the future, to help you reinforce old connections and create new ones, at every single touch point.

MAKING AN IMPACT

With temperatures soaring by the year, global warming is a pressing reality, now more than ever. So, a greener future is undoubtedly the need of the hour. Hyundai acknowledges this and is thoughtfully re-imagining its



AS A BRAND THAT'S CONSTANTLY RAISING THE BAR OF AUTOMOTIVE PERFORMANCE AND DESIGN, HYUNDAI RECOGNISES THAT WE STAND AT THE CUSP OF GREAT PROGRESS — AND IT'S BEYOND READY TO USHER IN THIS NEWER, MORE ADVANCED FUTURE.

technology and operations, to foster a brighter future for the planet.

Making way for a sustainable tomorrow, the brand is re-assessing each of its processes through a renewable lens. For starters, the Hyundai manufacturing facility in Chennai, India is nearly self-sustainable in terms of water-reliance. Here, 100% rainwater harvesting is carried out and as much as 89% of the plant relies on renewable forms of energy. With six ponds providing a total water storage capacity of 3.35 lakh kilo liters, Hyundai aims at absolute self-sustenance – targeting zero external water dependency – by 2025. Unlike other automotive companies, Hyundai is focusing its efforts on pioneering hydrogen energy for the greater good.

This vision is also reflected in the creation of the company's vehicles. The imminent launch of Hyundai's NEXO only drives this point home. NEXO is a radical innovation by Hyundai. It's the first dedicated fuel cell electric vehicle that promises a superlative driving experience that's also clean and green. Think smart. Think eco-positive. Think Hyundai.

CONSTANT INNOVATION

Hyundai strongly believes in 'Progress for Humanity'. Every single creation here is adapted for the Indian consumer, to ensure that your experience with Hyundai is

absolutely hassle-free. So it is the brand where innovation comes with a humanitarian touch.

For instance, what if owning a Hyundai vehicle also gave you access to special privileges and a bouquet of intriguing lifestyle services? With the Hyundai Mobility Membership program, this is now a reality. In an effort to move beyond mobility, this program – which functions through a handy app – offers intuitive services for your every need, including shopping, fitness, entertainment and more. Through this program, you can enjoy a host of special privileges without worrying about earning or redeeming points.

Adding extra ease to your lifestyles, Hyundai has also introduced 'Click to Buy' (CTB) – an end-to-end online buying platform designed for those who're constantly on the move, with no time to spare. With this offering, you can enjoy car comparisons, read more about your selected car and choose the right variant with easy finance options from trusted banks. No time to swing by for a look-see? Fret not. CTB offers a 360-degree view of the car, without you having to move an inch. Better still, safe and sanitized cars are always at the ready for a test-drive at your doorstep, making your buying experience smoother than ever.

What we're trying to say is: Hyundai understands that mobility today is not only about getting from one place to another. It is also about all the augmented experiences that come with — the products, the conveniences, the luxuries, the intuitive solutions and above all, the quality. Hyundai understands that it's all about targeting these extraordinary experiences, for a better tomorrow. And it conquers them – as it has before and as it continues to do, relentlessly.

"Beyond Mobility"
Scan to know more

HYUNDAI

For more information, visit hyundai.com

MADE TO Measure

It takes a village to make bespoke *vêtements* that carry for generations, and these up-and-comers know exactly what it takes to turn out the perfect personalized piece of luxury.

The word 'bespoke' is bandied about in fashion about as much as 'synergy' in corporate boardrooms, and like its counterpart has begun to feel like empty jargon. Any designer fitting couture to size feels free to slap the label on for extra credence with luxury buyers. But what it truly takes to create a bespoke outfit or accessory is far from run-of-the-mill alteration. From the visualization stage to the final custom-built piece, bespoke is equal parts collaboration and painstaking execution. Eight of the fashion-verse's hidden bespoke gems tell us exactly what it takes to create a piece that's legitimately one of a kind….

BY **SAUMYAA VOHRA**

PHILOCALY

What: Contemporary Indian, formalwear

Where: New Delhi | Vijayawada | Guwahati | Patna

Though the craftspeople at Philocaly will cut you a great suit—whether for a sangeet or a Sunday brunch—the aesthetic that prevails is an unfussy one. Think hues, styles, and fabrics that don't make noise, but an impact. You'll find separates or whole looks at their stores; they do great overcoats, single-breasters, and Nehru jackets in particular. Each piece may source, say, fine English fabrics or German trims, but the craftsmanship is Indian all the way. They don't do shoes themselves, but the bespoke brands they've partnered with can whip you up a pair, no trouble.

Bespoke in a Post-Pandemic World: "Bespoke, intelligently teamed with technology, is undeniably the future," creative director Ashna Verma says with some confidence. "Bespoke houses that are able to balance a scalable business model with uncompromising craftsmanship, effective storytelling through social media, and a heightened convenience for the customer are here to stay and grow. For us, it's simply a sustainable way of moving forward."

JATIN MALIK COUTURE

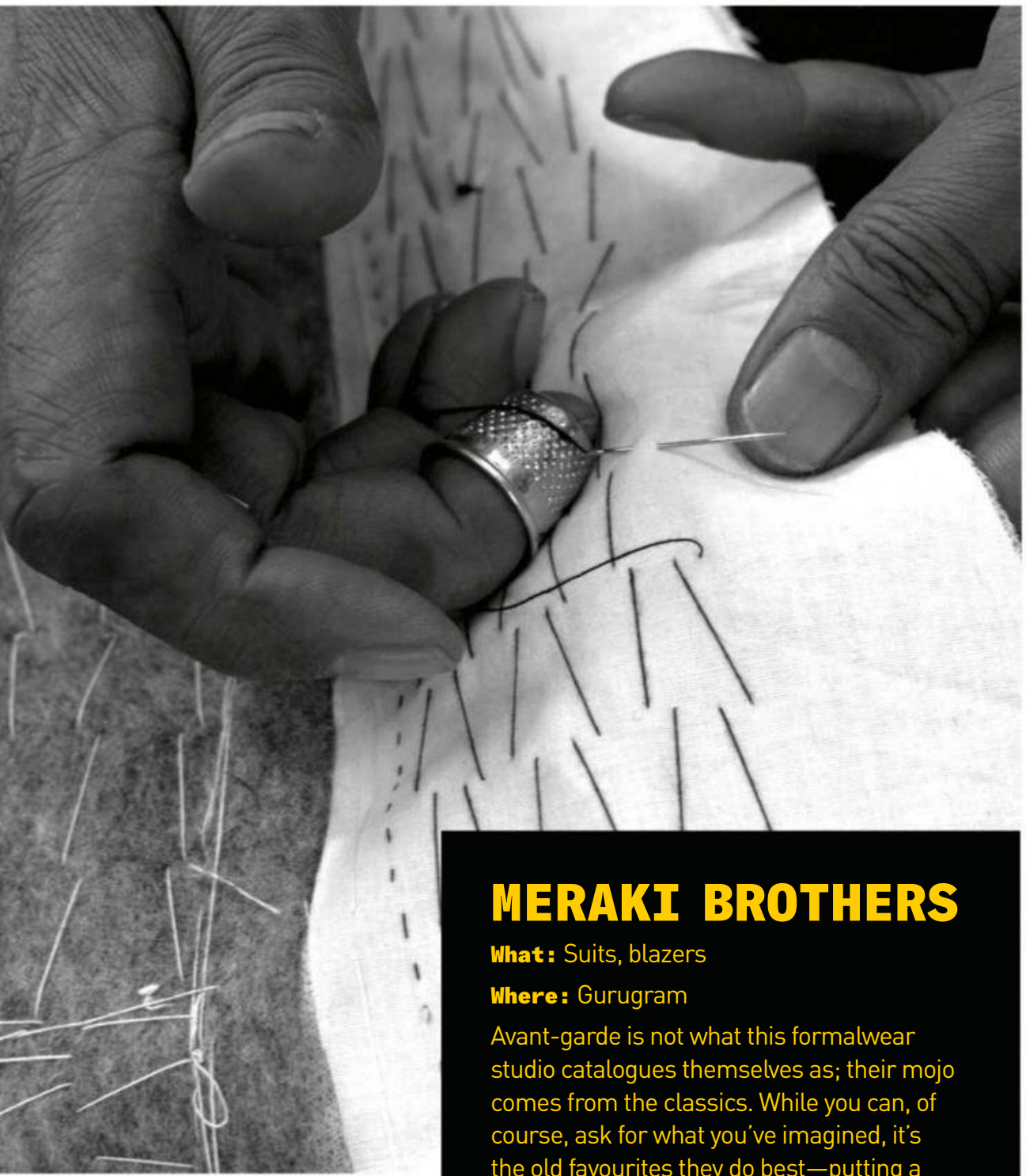
What: Traditional couture, shoes

Where: New Delhi | Bengaluru | Mumbai | London

A groom with a vision of his ideal D-Day look will find a fitting collaborator in this couturier—a rare mix of inventive with ideas and comme il faut with process. Ideal for either a few handcrafted (and hand-embroidered) Nehru jackets, easy shrugs to complete an existing ensemble, or to develop a head-to-toe look—bandhgala to custom shoes—from scratch for the occasion. Hand-painted organza, appliqué, hand-installed brass detailing, and *resham* and *dabka* embroidery are but a few of the myriad elements at play in these painstakingly created pieces—each distinct enough so that no two are ever the same.

The Secret Sauce: "Time—and a blend of details. An average Jatin Malik groom's ensemble takes about 300 to 400 working hours to put together," says Malik. "We use a lot of 3D elements on the base of a piece instead of the usual embroidery techniques. We're a rare brand that uses an amalgam of hand-paint, surface texturing, and 3D embroidery techniques. It's essentially artistry, which takes a lot of time since it is made with precision—which is exactly what makes it couture."

PHOTOS COURTESY PHILOCALY TEAM; JATIN MALIK COUTURE.



MERAKI BROTHERS

What: Suits, blazers

Where: Gurugram

Avant-garde is not what this formalwear studio catalogues themselves as; their mojo comes from the classics. While you can, of course, ask for what you've imagined, it's the old favourites they do best—putting a personal spin on things so there's no second on the streets. While the cuts may be time-honoured, the smorgasbord of fabrics and details adds depth to the simplest of pieces that come out of this workshop, with careful craftsmanship at its heart.

It's All About Technique: "Our biggest strength at Meraki Brothers is using only the 'handmade full-floating canvas' technique for making all our bespoke garments; it's the oldest, most time-consuming method of making suit jackets and blazers, and needs superior skill," says founder Rahul Chibber. "You first draft an inner body frame for the jacket using different natural-canvas materials, and then layer the actual fabric on top of that frame. Sadly, the last 40 years have made most tailors switch to cheaper machined suits because of the all the extra work and time this takes. Most wearers aren't aware, so they'll pay for a high-quality suit and get something stiff or ill fitted because this technique hasn't been used. We invariably take our clients through this before we start on a piece for them."

ASTERI MAN

What: Shoes, travel accessories

Where: Mumbai

Monograms may have been made the apotheosis of custom luxury by Louis Vuitton, but this homegrown brand elevates that personalization further; think custom fabrics and tailor-made motifs. An online brand that understands the assignment, the folks at Asteri will consult with you to build those bullseye shoes or that luggage from scratch. Whether it's as simple as a pair of mules or something as specific as a belt or watch case, outline your idea and it will spring to life.

What It Takes to Create Luxury: "The best quality materials—from cotton, suede, and velvet to vegan leather or vegan suede for our travel accessories," Yashwardhan Lath, founder, tells us. "Luxury is a feeling, and we make all our products [by hand, crafted] with age-old techniques to capture that feeling. Being a luxury brand also means providing our craftsmen the right working conditions and fair remuneration while making quality products. The fact that each piece is uniquely personalized with symbols of a moment, memory, or motif that's special for each customer is a marker of that luxury."

"The idea is to have superlative quality fabric made by artisans, not machines."

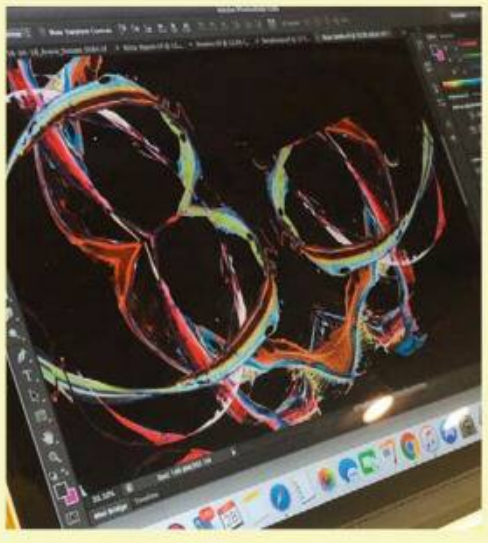
N.M. DESIGN STUDIO

What: Suits, streetwear

Where: Mumbai

Ask this Bandra studio and they can create anything you can dream up, no matter how left field—or so their M.O. seems. While they specialize in suits (both festive and formal) and streetwear that finds its pedigree in Indian textiles and prints, a marrying of worlds is very much possible at this detail-driven brand. While fine fabrics and hand-block printing (no digital prints around here) play a pivotal part, it's embroidery that's the big sell for N.M., who have partnered with the most choice embroiderers in the business. If you've been looking for a place that can nail intricacy, you've found it.

What It Takes to Make Bespoke: "It's a long, tedious process, which always begins with a client one-on-one," head designer Kashish Hans tells us. "I understand what they want, ideate and draw up some initial sketches, get a go-ahead on the idea that works for them, and start the sampling process. Once I've created multiple swatches that I can take to the client, we finalize a design and help them take the other decisions around it—and then the work really starts! Sourcing great fabrics, spending hours getting the cut just right, embellishing, embroidering—but it's always worth the wait because it's truly a unicorn of a piece."



NOUGHTONE

What: Outerwear, athleticwear, suits

Where: New Delhi

The worlds of wedding wear and business formal have each had a foothold in personalized fashion since trench coats were wartime utility garments. Custom outerwear, however, and especially athleticwear, is a much rarer sartorial breed. With both NoughtOne's online and brick-and-mortar stores, you're taken through customization options and given home measurements, trials, and delivery service on request. Any sportsman or athlete serious about their adventure gear can get technical pieces like water-resistant anoraks and windcheaters crafted to the exact specs they need to raise some hell.

Living in a Material World: "We use a wide range of fabrics that includes custom-made handloom fabrics from the Himalayas; imported performance fabrics from Korea; and locally sourced khadi cotton, wool, and other cotton fabrics from our mills," says founder Abhishek Paatni. "In addition to this, we employ a host of artisan-first techniques to work on and enrich those fabrics, like quilting and embroidery. The idea is to have superlative quality that's been made by artisans instead of machines, thereby making our line of products more sustainable and unique."

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MERAKI BROTHERS; ASTERI MAN; NOUGHTONE; N.M. DESIGN STUDIO.

KARRTIK D

What: Weddingwear, accessories

Where: Delhi

You'd catch Ranveer Singh rolling into a party with a swaggy pair of shades and Karrtik D's embellished lapel tux, or pairing their striped merino wool with big faux fur. But despite celebrity cred (Vicky Kaushal, Ajay Devgn, and Anil Kapoor included), the label is still one of the better-kept secrets of B-Town, finding its beginnings in the much humbler Model Town, Delhi. The conception of a top-to-toe look is almost ritualistic at this studio: cutting, creating basted fittings, ripping those basted fittings to parts, re-cutting, adjustments, and, voila, a master pattern.

An Experimental Era: "Bespoke works especially well right now because people have come out of the pandemic pickier than before," founder Karrtik Dhingra shares. "The 2021 Indian man is more discerning than ever, and cares about what fabrics, detailing, and stitching goes into his suit—and never more so than when his wedding looks hang in the balance. He wants to try neoteric fabrics, cuts, and combinations. The idea is to exude royalty, and to be completely unique—and we help them get there."

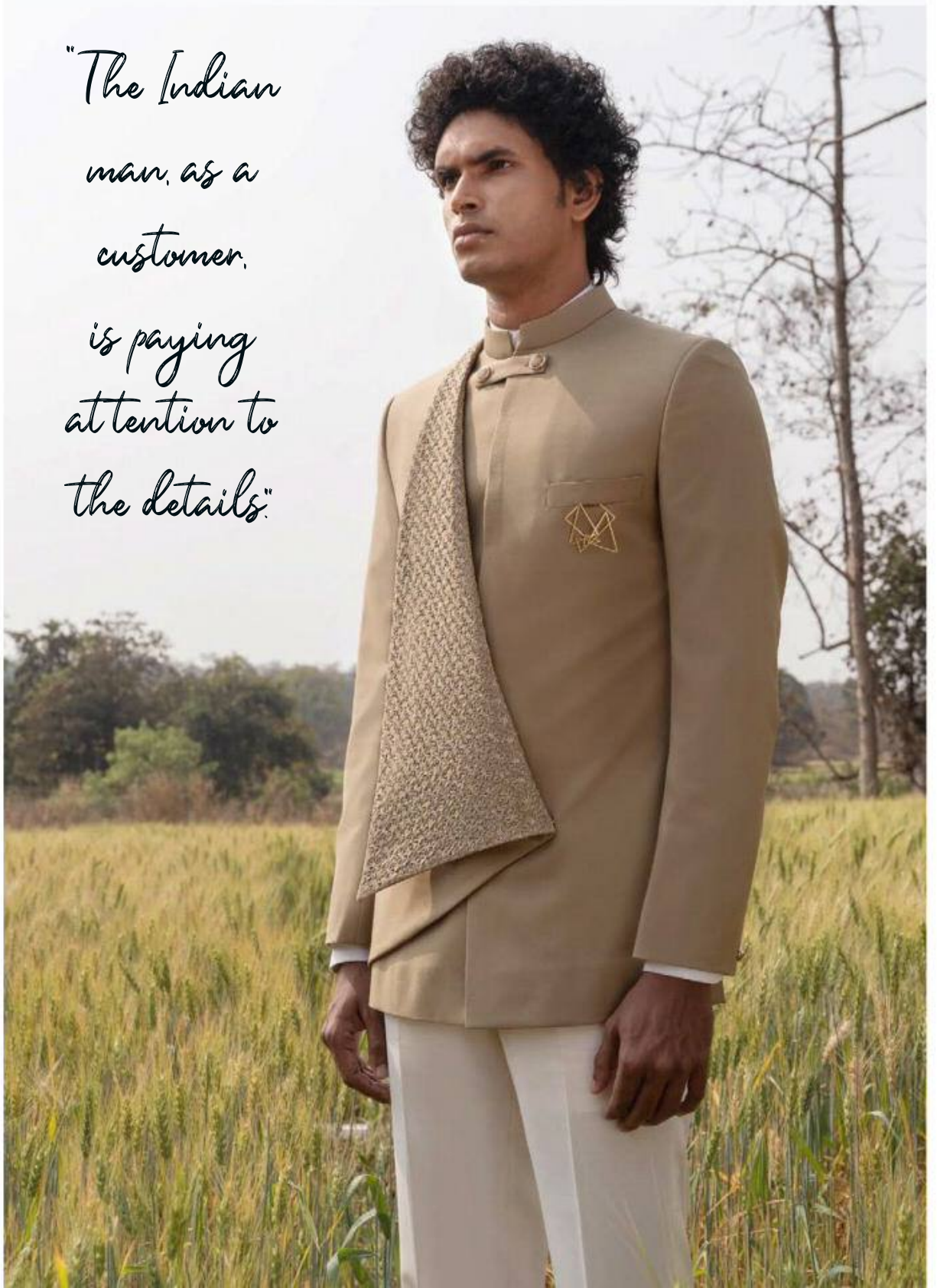
SARAH & SANDEEP

What: Formalwear, festive menswear

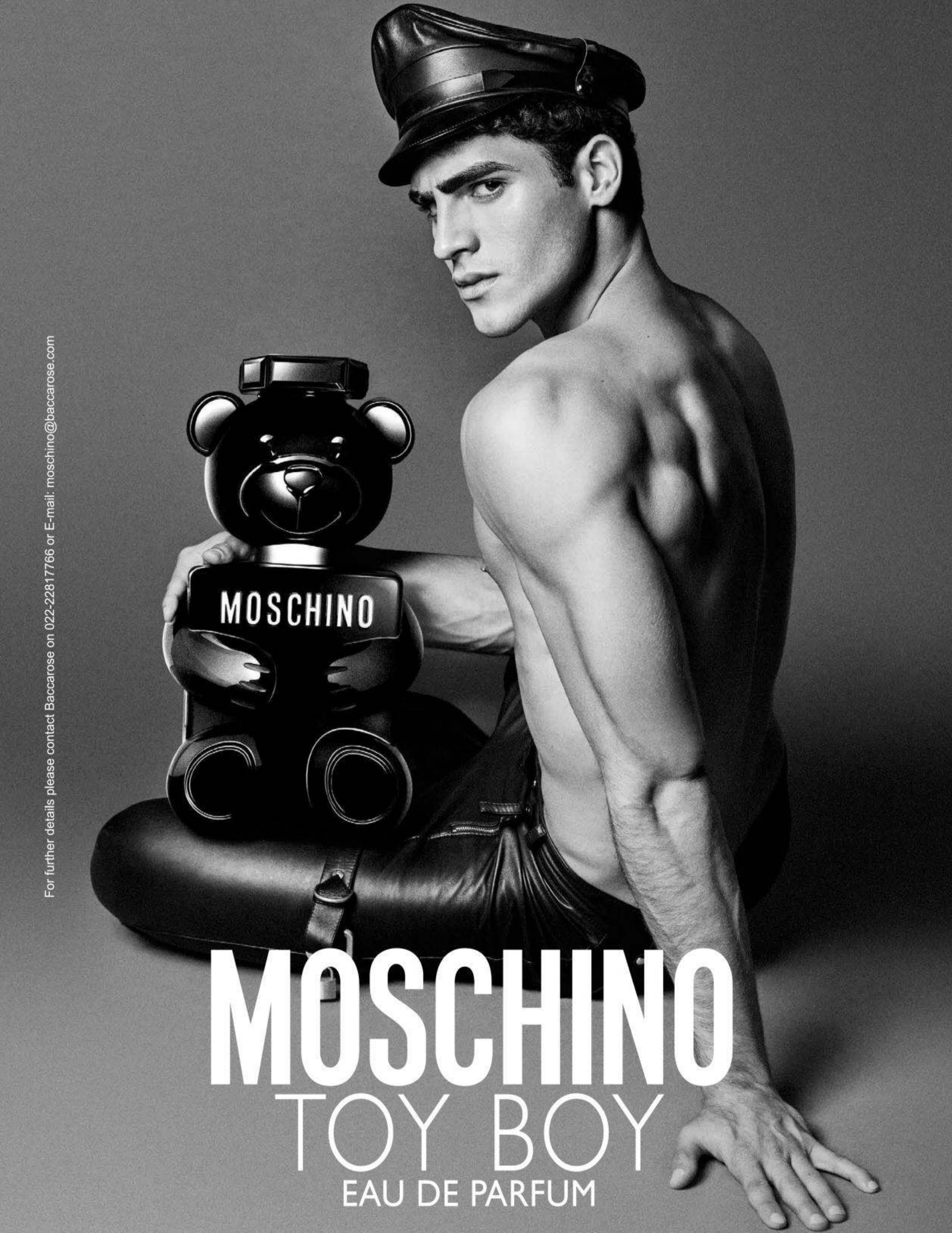
Where: Mumbai

Founded by Sarah and Sandeep Gonsalves, the brand formerly known as SS Homme prides itself on being 'fabric first'. It all starts with finding the perfect fabric for your tux, suit, sherwani or such, and the options are illimitable but primo—pure Italian silk; worsted wool in the super 100s; mohair, cashmere, and merino; and shirts with Egyptian cottons by the best houses in the business. When you have your star, a laboured measurement process (of up to 50 different body measurements) ensues before a pattern is cut from scratch. Then, every detail—from buttons to lining—is discussed, and about 30 days and two trials later, you have yourself a bespoke outfit.

What a Man Wants: "The Indian man, as a customer, is paying attention to the little things, and has varied requests; it could be a utility request as simple as a passport zipper in their business travel jacket, or something more elaborate, like their initials embroidered on the shawl for their sherwani," says Sarah. "Recently, we have seen an increased number of requests for concept sherwanis that are colour-coordinated with the bride's outfit. Clients usually pick their embroidery swatch, and we present them with personalizations, be it initials or a date, on the collar or the inside of the jacket to make it special. They appreciate that thought and detail." GQ



PHOTOS COURTESY OF KARRTIK D; SARAH & SANDEEP.



For further details please contact Baccarose on 022-22817766 or E-mail: moschino@baccarose.com

A BIOPHILIC SLOW DOWN IN A REMOTE RETREAT

As India opens to international travel, book yourself a rejuvenating stay at Woods at Sasan, a quiet retreat in Gujarat — an ideal destination for a well-earned rest in these trying times

2020 was a year that redefined life as we know it with the home as the 'new sanctuary'. As life and work shifted indoors, we discovered ample time for the self, looking inward rather than outward for growth. Fulfilment was defined by new parameters – quietude and introspection. In this changed landscape, holidays shifted from popular tourist beats to remote retreats that offer the healing touch of nature and space for self-discovery and realisation.

If you are looking for a space that lets you be one with nature while you rejuvenate and relax, Woods at Sasan is the place to be. A quiet retreat in Gujarat, this resort is one of the first spaces in India that successfully melds biophilic design principles of architecture with thoughtful hospitality. Nestled on the fringes of the Sasan Gir forest and sanctuary, the eight-acre space is built around an old mango orchard that has over 280 mango trees among a host of other species. Tucked into this remote oasis of deep green, the retreat is a blend of gorgeous contemporary spaces that merge into the surrounding forest. Designed with modern architectural principles to respond to regional conditions, Woods at Sasan is built using locally sourced, non-toxic, reclaimed and reusable materials to minimise concrete use and reduce carbon footprint. It combines elegant wood interiors enhanced by unpolished stone, terracotta artefacts and hand-woven macrame rugs. Cool lime plastered walls washed with natural light through clear glass facades offer a soothing view of the vivid scenery. The 38-key property boasts 11.5% of the building footprint and 30% of the total built-up as a semi-open area. The people at Woods at Sasan are active proponents of community involvement in the running of the resort and provide

employment to a number of the local populace especially craftspersons – khadi, macrame, embroidery and ceramicware and terracotta are part of the interiors lending it a memorable blend of modernity and tradition.

Woods at Sasan is spearheading a whole new way of wellbeing – a slow, sustainable lifestyle that encourages one to really unwind, experience and be aware of the beauty of the surrounding forest and immerse oneself into local experiences that are unique as well as low on environmental impact. The retreat offers a selection of Wellbeing Programming Pathways that offer a holistic approach to self-care. The three-pronged approach involving the mind, body and spirit offers up Pathways that combine individually tailored wellness routines — a combination of physical activities such as open-air yoga, nature and cycling trails and meals that focus on freshness and balanced nourishment.

Their farm-to-table approach with ingredients sourced from their own orchard are cooked to perfection and are a refreshing change to the palate. The Nutritional Pathways are based on the ancient Sattvic principles of eating the right foods at the right time and aligned with natural circadian rhythms. The mindfully curated Sattvic meal plan is surprisingly delicious and very rejuvenating. But for a truly unforgettable experience, sign up for the Sattvic Silent Dinner — a freshly prepared meal that is eaten in the open by candlelight in complete silence. The activities on offer include forest bathing, eco-trails, cycling expeditions and birding tours with the in-house naturalist along with Tai-chi and open-air yoga and meditation classes. The progressive wellbeing experts at the retreat offer personalised wellness consultations and healing therapies such as sound healing, reiki and lama-fere as well as bespoke Ayurvedic pathways. For nature lovers, the Game Safaris with the in-house naturalist who dishes out intriguing forest facts, is a great experience.

A holiday at this nature rich retreat leaves one feeling refreshed and cleansed — a true rest that can only be brought about by slowing down and living well. Situated within, but still a far cut from the tourist beat, this outstanding modern retreat in the woods is an hour's drive from the scenic town of Diu, or a 5-hour drive from Ahmedabad with a pick-up and drop from the nearest airports in the retreat cars. The retreat is recognised internationally as a sustainable and low environment impact vacation spot that also supports and promotes the local economy. In these fast-paced times where being still is an anomaly, Woods at Sasan offers the rare luxury of just being present in the moment, every moment.

WOODS AT SASAN

For more information, email reservation@1000island.in or call 8758100055/ +912877-281000

ANDREW GARFIELD'S ANSWERED PRAYERS

How the erstwhile superhero—and perpetual seeker—fashioned himself into one of Hollywood's finest actors on his own soulful terms.

BY **SAM SCHUBE**

VEST AND TURTLENECK BY **PRADA.**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **KATIE McCURDY**
STYLED BY **MOBOLAJI DAWODU**

GROOMING: DANA BOYER AT THE WALL GROUP FOR DYSON. TAILORING: SAMANTHA McELRATH AT CAROL AI STUDIO. SET DESIGN: JACOB BURSTEIN FOR MHS ARTISTS.

EXPLORING LAKSHADWEEP

With Cordelia Cruises, unexplored paths lead to undiscovered treasures

It is often said that exploring the unexplored is the best part of being a traveller. And when it comes to travelling within India, there are several offbeat destinations and novel places waiting to be discovered. The beautiful union territory of Lakshadweep that is incidentally India's smallest union territory is one such treasure. This stunning archipelago consisting of 36 islands with an area of 32 sq km is a paradise that is as enchanting as exciting.

CORDELIA CRUISES: MAKING LAKSHADWEEP ACCESSIBLE

With Cordelia cruises your dream of visiting Lakshadweep is now closer and easier than you think. Cruising on the Empress, guests can choose from a plethora of activities while soaking in the local culture of this little union territory. From kayaking, snorkelling, glass bottom boat rides, scuba diving to local village tours that encompass cultural and food experiences, Lakshadweep with Cordelia Cruises is sure to be an unmatched experience unlikeany other.

Accessible from Kochi by ships and flights, visiting this environmentally sensitive archipelago entails a good deal of preparation in terms of obtaining permits, clearances, and permissions from the relevant authorities. It is key to note that Lakshadweep is a destination that is replete with highly fragile ecological and environmental characteristics which not only adds to its mystique character but also makes it an elusive place to visit.

Accessibility to Lakshadweep has always been an obstacle for travel enthusiasts who'd wish to visit this unexplored and pristine islands. Cordelia Cruises have resolved this big gap in Indian tourism industry and made travel to Lakshadweep effortless.

With the journey being as exciting as the destination, guests can choose from itineraries departing from Mumbai as well as Kochi. Guests can experience premium five nights on-board services, unmatched hospitality, state-of-the-art amenities, unlimited activities, and the best of Indian and global cuisine. Expect to also be enthralled by popular entertainment shows such as The Balle Balle Show, India Cinemagic, spellbinding magic shows, burlesque shows and musicals such as Romance in Bollywood which presents a dose of Bollywood with a touch of romance.

So, what are you waiting for? Set sail on an incredible journey, get set to cruise to Lakshadweep, you are sure to cherish this experience for a long time to come!

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For more information, visit cordeliacruises.com

It's not that playing Spider-Man wasn't fun, Andrew Garfield says. No, playing Spider-Man—which he did in two films, preceded in his red-and-blue spandex by Tobey Maguire and followed by Tom Holland—was great. It was all the stuff that came along with being Spidey that he couldn't stand.

Before he even agreed to star in 2012's *The Amazing Spider-Man,* he worried about this—about the way the job seemed certain to transform him into a public figure and upend his life. But he said yes anyway, and then watched with mounting panic as the role basically consumed his life.

Garfield was shooting his second *Spider-Man* film, in 2013, when he realized he had reached a breaking point. It felt excessive—the money, the fame, the attention. They were filming in New York City, Spidey's ancestral home. Garfield and his co-star, Emma Stone, were dating at the time and had become a tier-one paparazzi magnet. He felt an urgent need to get his feet planted firmly on the ground.

He happened to reach this observation about the corrosive qualities of fame while sitting at the bar of the since-shuttered Tribeca branch of Nobu, the celebrity-beloved sushi chain. ("Like a fancy fucker, oh, gosh," he says now, laughing.) As a sort of protective balm for his psyche, he'd gotten into the work of Michael Meade, a scholar of mythology. "It's all about calling and soul and destiny," he explains. "Living true to the self." There at the restaurant, reading one of Meade's books and thinking about the ways his career seemed to be getting in the way of his life, he decided a new approach was called for. So he signed himself up for the annual men's retreat Meade held in Northern California.

A few months later, Garfield found himself piloting a rental car down a "long fucking road into the wilderness", losing cell service and staring down the barrel of six days in the woods with 90 men he didn't know. What happened next, he says, was exactly what he'd been looking for. "People start to really dive into themselves and reveal who they are to themselves and to everyone, and to have it witnessed by a group of 90 dudes, some of whom are hardcore motherfuckers," he says. He loved it. Particularly the chance it offered to shed his celebrity, to just be Andrew: another guy trying to figure out who he was, and who he wanted to be.

This propensity for searching—for trying on different perspectives and new approaches—first found expression, for Garfield, in the U.K. theatre scene of his youth, where he discovered that acting might be a vehicle for communing with a kind of higher power. Today, still boyish and earnest at 38, he describes the theatre as the place he feels "most alive, and in line with what I'm supposed to do on this earth at the time being".

But he didn't stay confined to the theatre for long; he was handsome and

COAT, SHIRT, AND PANTS BY **THE ROW.** SHOES BY **CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN.** NECKLACES AND RING BY **DAVID YURMAN.**

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charming and game, so he quickly began booking parts on television and then in films. He blew up seemingly in an instant, making an impression not just with audiences but with Hollywood's most discerning arbiters of talent too. "Certain actors, with very little time or effort, are able to create a 'relationship' with the audience—like empathic symbiosis," David Fincher, who directed Garfield in 2010's *The Social Network,* wrote to me in an all-caps, frequently bolded email. "The people watching are immediately embroiled emotionally—but it's not a learned trick, it's a miraculous gift." Garfield's friend Laura Dern puts it this way: "As an actor, it's an incredible thing to work with another actor whose Richter scale for honesty is so pure."

Dern and Garfield got to know each other while making an independent film around the time he was finishing up with *Spider-Man.* They're still close—Dern fondly recalls a road trip up California's Highway 1 spent listening to Cat Stevens and John Prine, and she occasionally goes to Garfield for parenting advice, despite Garfield not having children—but at the time, she was struck by the way he was thinking through his post-Spidey life. "I just think it speaks to his integrity that he was like, 'Whoa, this is one of those moments where people can find or lose themselves, so I'm going to sign up for the finding journey,'" she says.

Because he worked so hard to remove himself from the machinery of celebrity, it's with some trepidation that Garfield is stepping back into the public eye this fall. He's playing the disgraced televangelist Jim Bakker in *The Eyes of Tammy Faye.* And then he's portraying Jonathan Larson, the creator of *Rent,* in Lin-Manuel Miranda's directorial debut: the adaptation of Larson's autobiographical musical *Tick, Tick… Boom!*

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Inhabiting the sordid psyche of Bakker wasn't simple; it was "the biggest stretch I've ever had as an actor", Garfield says. And the role of Larson tested him in different ways: For all Garfield's theatrical experience, he'd never done a musical. But he had a year and a half to prepare before shooting, and he assured Miranda that he could learn how to sing.

But as Miranda tells me, learning to sing like Larson presented a unique challenge. "Composers sing their shit in a different way than musical-theatre performers, for better or worse," he says. "We certainly don't sound as good as the people we hire to sing our songs, but there's a different kind of commitment. There's kind of a full-body thing, because we've had to play this shit for backers' auditions. We have to throw everything we have at it." Garfield needed to develop the raw singing ability—and then, as Miranda puts it, sing it like the person who thought those words up.

For months, Garfield took singing lessons: "Just kind of in a room, freaking out", he says. The funny thing, he adds, is that learning how to sing isn't really about learning how to sing. "It's learning how to release your voice, to be able to reach notes and be able to control it. Open it up—peel away the layers of the onion, basically, so that your voice is liberated."

As Larson, Garfield is liberated. The film centres on the composer before he's written *Rent,* with his worries of unfulfilled potential manifesting as a ticking sound in his head. Garfield's Larson is all hair and elbows and big belting voice in his attempts to quiet it down. It's a showy part, but one that also allowed him to get at the deeper ideas he's long tackled in his work. "Andrew Garfield as a searcher has met his match in Jonathan Larson," Miranda says. "You have to understand: Jonathan Larson was the kind of guy who would write himself existential questions, and then write songs as the responses to those existential questions. *How do you measure a year?* emerges as '525,600 minutes'. I think Andrew found a kindred spirit in that, because Jonathan became a way for him to ask those big questions too."

Garfield has found that sort of work to be the thing that helps give his life meaning. "I find spiritual pursuit to be the only pursuit, really, for me," he says. "And that's with my work and otherwise." He lost his mother not

COAT BY **AMIRI.** SWEATER BY **PAUL SMITH.** PANTS BY **DRIES VAN NOTEN.** BOOTS BY **GRENSON.**

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BLAZER AND PANTS BY **WINNIE.** TANK TOP BY **CALVIN KLEIN UNDERWEAR.** SHOES BY **FENDI.** NECKLACE BY **DAVID YURMAN.**

long ago, and her passing only deepened that conviction. "There's an acute awareness of just the ephemeral nature of this. And that is what gives it all meaning. I think the consideration of what's going on behind everything is the only thing I'm interested in."

That's what makes this latest stretch seem so treacherous. Garfield's years of self-work might ensure that this process won't rearrange his soul the way *Spider-Man* did, but getting these films out into the world is nonetheless beginning to dredge up all the stuff that used to drive him crazy. The fact that people keep asking if he's in the new *Spider-Man,* despite his constant denials, doesn't help. ("I am not," he tells me.) He hasn't worked intensively since 2018, and he's become comfortable not working: He's been renovating his home in London, turning the basement into a sort of minimalist zen chamber. He's been swimming and practising woodworking. He isn't sure how this re-entry into the world of celebrity is going to go.

"A lot's changed since then," he says. "Like losing my mum, and my psyche being totally rearranged by that. And life taking on a completely different hue and texture and colour. And my inner being totally different. Tasting things differently. Hearing. Smell. It's all different. Nothing's the same." So now he's this newly formed person—one we haven't met before, but about whom we presume to know plenty—re-emerging into the world.

Underneath all of this is, of course, the work. The possibility, however rare, of submitting to something shaggy and weird and altogether consciousness reordering. The possibility—available from the theatre, but even from *Spider-Man* too—of a life-changing interaction with a piece of art. "That thing of when you read a great piece of literature and you feel the author reaching their hand through and putting it on yours and saying, 'Me too'—it's that feeling," he says. When everything else seems a little too big, a little too bright and loud and pointed in the wrong direction, there is still, at the end of the day, this.

It's why you put up with all the other stuff, he says, growing expansive and speaking rapidly. "That existential anxiety dissipates, and you suddenly remember your belonging," he says. "You suddenly remember you deserve to be here. There's no such thing as 'deserve', actually. Deserve is a construct. We're here. And we're meant to be here. And so let's be here fully." GQ

Sam Schube is GQ's deputy site editor.

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THE ART OF GIVING

Perfecting the art of master blending over the years, Royal Salute's precious liquids lie in wooden caskets, maturing, awaiting the celebratory moment they're ready for, to make magic as the ultimate gift

The art of symbolic and extravagant gifting has cemented its place in the British royal tradition. After all, it's intrinsic to their rich and varied customs, and rightfully so — a gift serves to be the ultimate memento of respect. The makers of Royal Salute 21 successfully captured the essence of this legacy by crafting an exceptional blend to honor Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation in 1953 — a tribute fit for a Queen. Ever since, their blends have known no bounds.

Long synonymous with true opulence, distinctive quality, and unparalleled luxury, the Royal Salute 21 is a rich, ambrosial spirit known to engage royal tastes and is a traditional sign of respect at Royal occasions. The crowning glory of their lauded portfolio of royal bottlings is their illustrious legacy of paying homage to the Queen. To this day, the Royal Salute has graced every significant event in the lives of the British Monarchy — a visionary engagement further commemorated with the launch of the Royal Wedding Edition at the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle. Owing to the label's distinguished legacy, Royal Salute undeniably adds grandeur to the gifting experience — from its refined blends to exquisitely crafted flagons, Royal Salute has time and again demonstrated why it's the king of all gifts for celebratory moments.

THE HERITAGE OF TRUE CRAFT

Named after the famous 21-gun-salute at the Tower of London, Royal Salute is one of the only brands to ever be associated with the tradition and is an immersive tale of regality. Given its rich history and noble stature, it is only fitting that this

luxurious blend makes for the ultimate gift and the utmost sign of respect.

ROYAL SALUTE 21 SIGNATURE BLEND

Long, sweet, fruity — the Signature Blend is an experience in itself, with a rich palette that invites the senses to an enveloping journey of regal luxury. A harmonious blend of sweet pears, citrus fruits, and summer flowers balanced with the affluence of sweet vanilla comes as foremost fruition, while dry, oaky flavours meet the tongue after a few sips — releasing a medley of spices, nuttiness of hazelnuts and warm hints of masculine smokiness.

Of course, the eminent legacy of this unique blend is something to uphold and cherish, but there's something magical about it that entices reinvention — an honor in creating something new for this sensational portfolio. In bringing new offerings to their discerning, loyal connoisseurs, Royal Salute protects the continuity of this iconic blend that was first crafted in 1953, with elevated spirits that evoke the true sense of the Royal Salute 21 while also having their own, unique distinctiveness that sets them apart.

Unveiling an all-new look for their signature 21-year-old spirit, the brand continues to reveal their rich heritage with a remarkable design that is a tribute to monarchical legacy, fit for modern royalty and connoisseurs who enjoy celebrating in style.

Creations of master blender Sandy Hyslop, the elegant blends are each housed in crafted porcelain flagons, glazed in individual hues inspired by the precious stones set within the Imperial State Crown: a sapphire flagon for The Signature Blend, an emerald flagon for The Malts Blend, an exclusive flagon with a unique glaze for the 38 Year Old Blend, and a decadent blue Darington crystal flagon for the 62 Gun Salute. With its intricate flagons, rich craftsmanship and distinguished heritage, it surely makes for the most veritable gift.

THE MALTS BLEND

Making history once again, the Malts Blend is the very first blended malt from Royal Salute, crafted with over 21 exquisite single malts. With a long, sweet, and tangy finish, the Malts Blend is a medley of orchard fruits, creamy vanilla, and banana crème brûlée, all enriched with subtle spices. Like a symphony, each of the single malts in this unique blend complement each other's flavours and create a single composition.

THE 38 YEAR OLD STONE OF DESTINY

Full, long, and lingering — this exquisite blend is an invigorating union of malts aged for no less than 38 years. Deep aromas of cedar wood and almonds are complemented by the richness of dried fruits, while a fervent floral fragrance is buried in a rich, sherried oakiness.

THE 62 GUN SALUTE

Celebrating the highest ceremonial honour of the 62 gun salute, this rare blend is reserved only for the most important royal occasions. The rich, lingering notes are laden with sumptuous fruits with the essence of sherried sweetness — enhanced with the magnificence of dark chocolate and warm cinnamon.

ROYAL SALUTE

For more information,
follow @royalsaluteindia on Instagram

Fashion is back! So are the galas, awards shows, and after-parties where it thrives. These are the people who went large.

The 12 Biggest Fits of the Year

KANYE WEST
Atlanta, August
"Hey, Siri, can you dry-clean rubber Balenciaga spikes?"

GUNNER STAHL/COURTESY OF DONDA.

THE PERFECT MATCH

Facilitating meaningful relationships, Vows for Eternity is a bespoke matchmaking service that leads you towards the path of true love

Anuradha Gupta

Think of the word 'matchmaking' and a whole slew of traditional methods of introducing two people, from 'biodata'-matching to well-meaning friends springs to mind. Modern-day men and women are sometimes seeking something more exciting, heart-pumping and memorable, as they search for "The One." And yet, it's also about wanting and finding that intense personal connection that allows today's millennials to finally envision a future with their perfect partner. Anuradha Gupta, Founder of Vows for Eternity, an entirely bespoke, global matchmaking service, tells us how a service like Vows for Eternity is facilitating introductions so individuals and families can shape and align their searches to find true happiness.

HOW IS VOWS FOR ETERNITY DIFFERENT FROM OTHER MATCHMAKING SERVICES OUT THERE?

In an age where the focus for matrimonial websites is entirely online, Vows for Eternity takes pride in being a one-of-a-kind, personalised service that is purely offline. Headquartered in New York with a strong presence in Mumbai, Delhi, and London, Vows for Eternity is exclusive, confidential, and premium. While we have a website and social media presence, our matchmaking happens only after we get to know our members better, not via an algorithm or any other cookie-cutter method.

DO MEN AND WOMEN HAVE VERY DIFFERENT REQUIREMENTS WHEN THEY APPROACH YOU, TO HELP THEM FIND THEIR LIFE PARTNERS?

Over the decade since Vows for Eternity launched, women come in with qualifications and careers prompting them to look for similar qualified, ambitious and like-minded individuals. Our members, both men and women, are driven, successful, confident, and willing to put in the work it takes to find the right life partner. More than ever, men are now valuing independent women with varied interests. Both individuals aspire for an equal partnership with a friend, confidante and soul mate which is what forms the bedrock of Indian marriages with this new generation.

MATCHMAKING CAN BE A VERY PUBLIC EVENT WITH NEWSPAPER MATRIMONIALS AND ONLINE PROFILES. HOW DO YOU MAKE YOUR SERVICE RELEVANT YET PERSONAL IN THIS FAST-PACED ENVIRONMENT?

Vows for Eternity prides itself on providing a confidential and offline service to its members who are well educated with a good blend of eastern and western cultures, yet rooted to their value systems. We understand that this aspect of people's lives is private and personal and our team brings to the process a healthy sense of reality with no judgement on anyone's life and circumstance. We share a member's details only when we feel the fit is right, giving both people the best chance to get to know each other well. I personally matchmake for members within our signature service, my team handholds every member in that tier of membership so they feel that their search is as personalised as can be. The value that this type of interaction brings makes the journey far more fruitful and meaningful. Many members feel they have an insight not just into what they are looking for in a partner but a deeper understanding of who they are themselves as the search evolves.

vows for eternity

Personalized Matchmakers for the Global Citizen

For more information, visit vowsforeternity.com, email contactus@vowsforeternity.com or call +91 98210 83382 or +91 22 6864 3999

BERNIE SANDERS

Washington, D.C., January

After the planet's most unlikely influencer wore a pair of recycled wool mittens made by one of his Vermont constituents to Joe Biden's inauguration, demand for quirky knitwear skyrocketed. But don't sleep on the rest of the Green Mountain State's contributions to fashion. "We have some good coats as well," the senator told CNN.

BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

THE ULTIMATE DESTINATION FOR BESPOKE MENSWEAR

To celebrate the completion of a decade of their label Qbik, designer duo Vrinda Sachdev and Gurinder Singh have launched a collection of bespoke menswear line that is a luxurious amalgamation of some of Qbik's signature styles. The duo talks to us about the label's evolving design philosophy, their journey so far and their recently-opened flagship store in Delhi

Vrinda Sachdev and Gurinder Singh, Co-Founders at Qbik

How does this collection stand out – what kind of visual stories are you looking to communicate through it?
This collection is stylish, mysterious, luxurious and at the same time sexy – a reimagination of some of Qbik's signature styles. Perfect for any occasion, the collection has a multi-dimensional narrative for our bespoke menswear line, as we celebrate 10 glorious years of Qbik. We also present a reinvigorated and uber cool collection of signature pieces by Qbik Man; creating a visual story through use of multiple techniques, textures and hand embroideries over silk and suiting fabrics.

What has your decade-long journey looked like with Qbik?
Qbik has been a labour of love – in the last decade we have established a strong retail presence and are known for our avant garde styling for men. We have evolved to become the destination of choice for menswear for any occasion and have found a loyal clientele in India, London, Jakarta and the US. Our travels, especially architecture, have been a real source of inspiration – geometric lines, domes, patterns all find a way into the surface embellishments and embroideries that we do. And our experimental cuts and drapes are what provide the trend quotient and make the ensembles edgy.

What's special about the flagship store? Please tell us how you've incorporated the brand ethos into it.
An experiential store, it is spread across 2500 sq ft in Chhatarpur, New Delhi – The Dhan Mill. The space is an amalgamation of uber luxurious interiors, rich furnishings with attention to detail, giving it a modern fusion aesthetic. Our staple black and white stripes make a smashing entryway and the industrial feel of the exposed ceiling adds magic to the look. The arches, metal tones and over curves are taken off our signature prints and embroidery details. The curved staircase and mezzanine floor drive attention to detail with a reverential commitment to craftsmanship.

What are your future plans with Qbik?
As of now we are concentrating on our new store in Delhi. It's a big step up and we would like to put our energies towards building a newer, more refined clientele that had just heard or never heard of Qbik. Delhi being the fashion capital lets us experience the taste of customers from all over India and the world. Mumbai has always loved and welcomed us, our style and our creations, it only makes sense to make our next retail presence be felt there.

For more information, visit qbik.in or follow @qbikofficial on Instagram

A$AP ROCKY AND RIHANNA

New York City, September

America's hottest couple were the last guests to arrive on the Met Gala red carpet, and undeniably the cosiest: Rocky was draped in a repurposed quilt (originally made by a SoCal grandmother) and a custom silk taffeta tux, both by ERL, and Rihanna was cocooned in Balenciaga couture.

ARTURO HOLMES/MG21/GETTY IMAGES.

CELEBRATE THE SPIRIT OF OUTDOOR TRAVELLING

Embarking on new adventures and chasing unique experiences that fuel your passion – Garmin India's latest track, Unleash Your Outdoor Spirit, pays homage to all those who are overcoming challenges and bouncing back with an undying spirit towards outdoor adventures – just like Garmin India's latest adventure series smartwatches, The Instinct Solar and fēnix 6 Solar Series

As the festive season brings with it a sense of renewed hope and optimism, there's no better time than now to revisit your travel plans. And now, with the country slowly opening up, we are all looking forward to spending more time outdoors, whether it is to travel or to stay fit. Joining us in this quest to explore newer adventures, while promoting the spirit of travelling among adventure seekers is Garmin India.

To celebrate the spirit of outdoor travelling, Garmin India has launched a new track Unleash Your Outdoor Spirit. Sung by Shillong's famous musical band, Khasi Bloodz to celebrate the success of their digital campaign Open the Door to the World, the song highlights the essence of outdoor travelling with Garmin's latest adventure series smartwatches equipped with solar-charging lenses – The Instinct Solar and fenix 6 Solar Series.

While several travel enthusiasts created memorable experiences across the country through this unique virtual campaign that was a hit on social media, the song highlights how Garmin devices encourage its users to reach their ultimate fitness and travel goals. To bring forth this idea, the song features various characters like a dancer profoundly showcasing her expertise in freestyle dancing, fitness enthusiasts following their fitness regime, a rock climber, and the bicycle rider who are in line to quench their thirst for adventure and achieve victory – each representing the zeal to get back on track despite the challenges brought about by the pandemic.

Along with encouraging everyone to follow their passion, the song also highlights the smartwatches' brilliant features. Instinct Solar and fenix 6 Solar Series offer unprecedented battery life with solar charging features, rugged yet sophisticated designs constructed to withstand harsh environments, unique tactical features such as the stealth mode, night vision mode, jumpmaster mode, and multi-sports mode. Health features include a blood oxygen sensor, accurate heart rate tracking, and energy level monitoring. Echoing the philosophy of finding newer adventures, the multisport smartwatches come integrated with a GPS navigation feature that breaks the conventional approach and guides the users in exploring the road less travelled.

For more information, visit garmin.co.in or follow @garminindia on Instagram, @GarminIN on Facebook and @Garmin India on Twitter

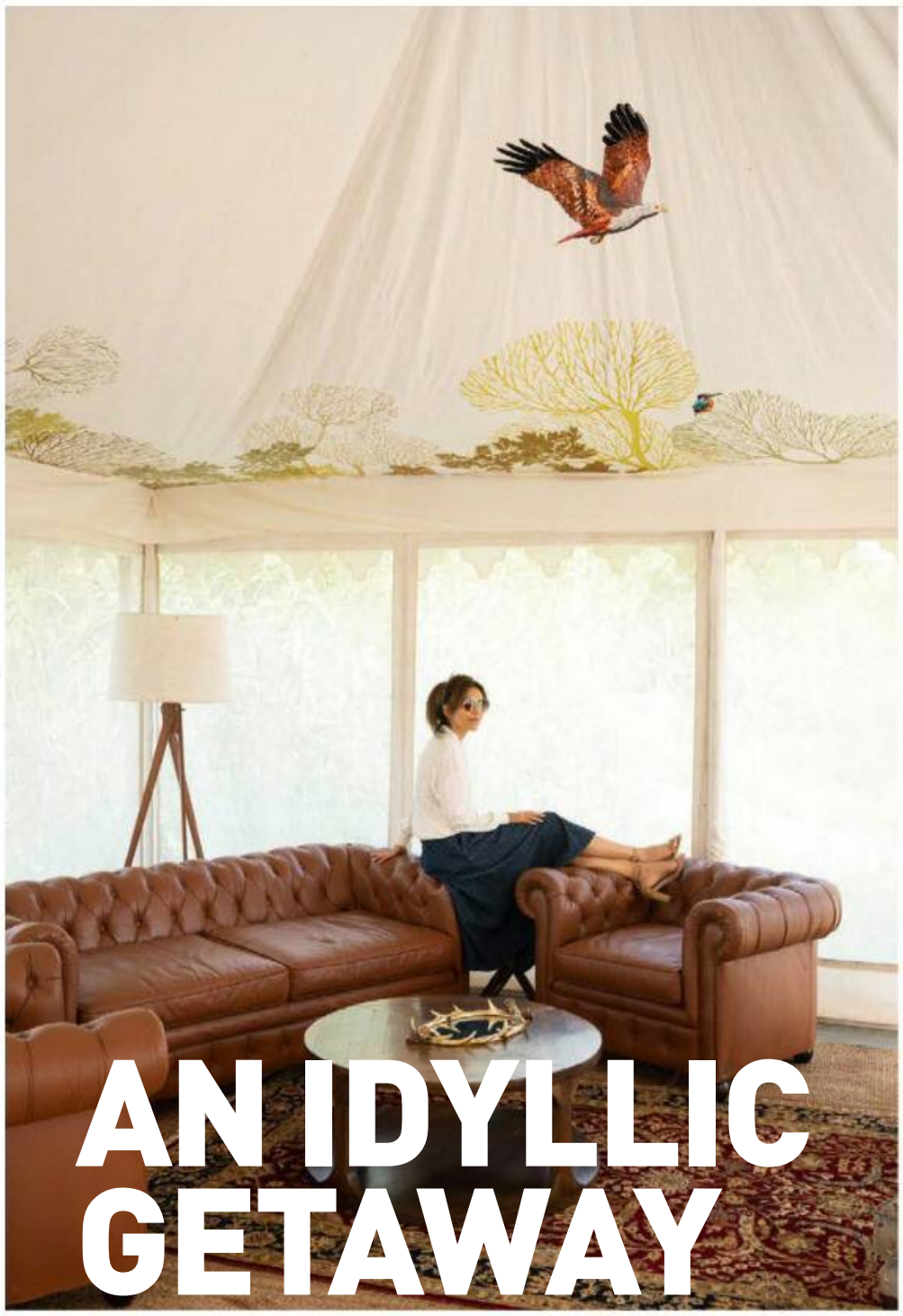
GARMIN

DANIEL CRAIG

London, September

The bow tie, the gold Omega watch, and the bespoke Anderson & Sheppard tux—apparently sewn directly onto Craig's body—are all par for the course for 007. The surprising cranberry velvet is what ranks this among the year's best outfits.

SAMIR HUSSEIN/WIREIMAGE/GETTY IMAGES.



AN IDYLLIC GETAWAY

For a truly paradisal getaway, escape to the Blackbuck Lodge—luxuriate in the wilderness and discover the brilliance of nature

There is much to be said for visiting the only grassland ecosystem in this part of the continent where mother nature's artistry can be appreciated in full spectacle. Set against the striking plains of the Velavadar National Park, the Blackbuck Lodge offers its guests immersive and tantalising adventures served with the backdrop of lush greenery, rich flora, fauna, and luxury. If you're looking to set off on a rejuvenating getaway, the Blackbuck Lodge is an unparalleled and intimate opportunity to revel in the storied array of nature's many treasures. From spotting a plethora of fauna, embarking on adventures to luxuriating in the wilderness and enjoying culinary delights, the Blackbuck Lodge is a veritable and incomparable destination for a memorable getaway.

The lodge's picture-perfect landscape seamlessly blends with the vistas of the neighboring national park which makes up a serene scenario. While a myriad of species including the Indian wolf and striped hyena call these plains home, it is the blackbuck that reigns supreme. For a true immersive experience, the best time to visit this destination is from mid October to March when the weather plummets and migratory birds make their presence known. The lush plains invite guests for exploration or spot endangered species of birds such as Lesser Florican and Saras Crane. Set off on a safari guided by field naturalists to observe wildlife in their habitat, or experience local wonders by taking a day trip to Lothal—one of the most important archaeological sites of the Indus Valley Civilisation or Alang, which is famous for its marine salvage industry. The Blackbuck Lodge arguably boasts an impressive gastronomic offering, too—the Bush Dinner is a culinary experience under the star-lit sky, replete with a bonfire, barbecue and local *Kathiawadi* food.

The remarkable beauty of its location is observed in every element of the lodge's architecture which is uniquely designed to celebrate the spirit of nature. Revealing rustic elegance juxtaposed with contemporary interiors, each of the 14 villas boast luxury in the details that offer the perfect setting for indulging in true opulence—every villa is bedecked with luxurious facilities like private patios and personal outdoor showers that make for an immersive experience with the goodness of nature. Rustic doors, windows, rough hewn-stone walls evoke the feeling of being nestled among the laps of nature, along with pool villas, scenic views of the savannah and an extravagant lounge area to help get in sync with the natural surroundings.

the Blackbuck Lodge
LUXURY IN THE WILDERNESS

For more information, visit theblackbucklodge.net

LAKEITH STANFIELD

Los Angeles, April

This safari-style jumpsuit made waves because it was part of Saint Laurent's womenswear collection—and because it was undeniably the flyest look at the Oscars.

TILDA SWINTON

Cannes, July

The ethereal actor wore billowing trousers and jumbo poet sleeves by Schiaparelli as a reminder to us all: Don't be afraid to size up.

HARVEY KEITEL

Los Angeles, June

Why don't *you* be the one to tell Harvey Keitel to put his toes away on the red carpet?

VIRGIL ABLOH

New York City, September

Come for the airbrushing, stay for the bunny ears—the Louis Vuitton designer knows how to use fashion to get people thinking.

LUCAS HEDGES AND TOMMY DORFMAN

New York City, June

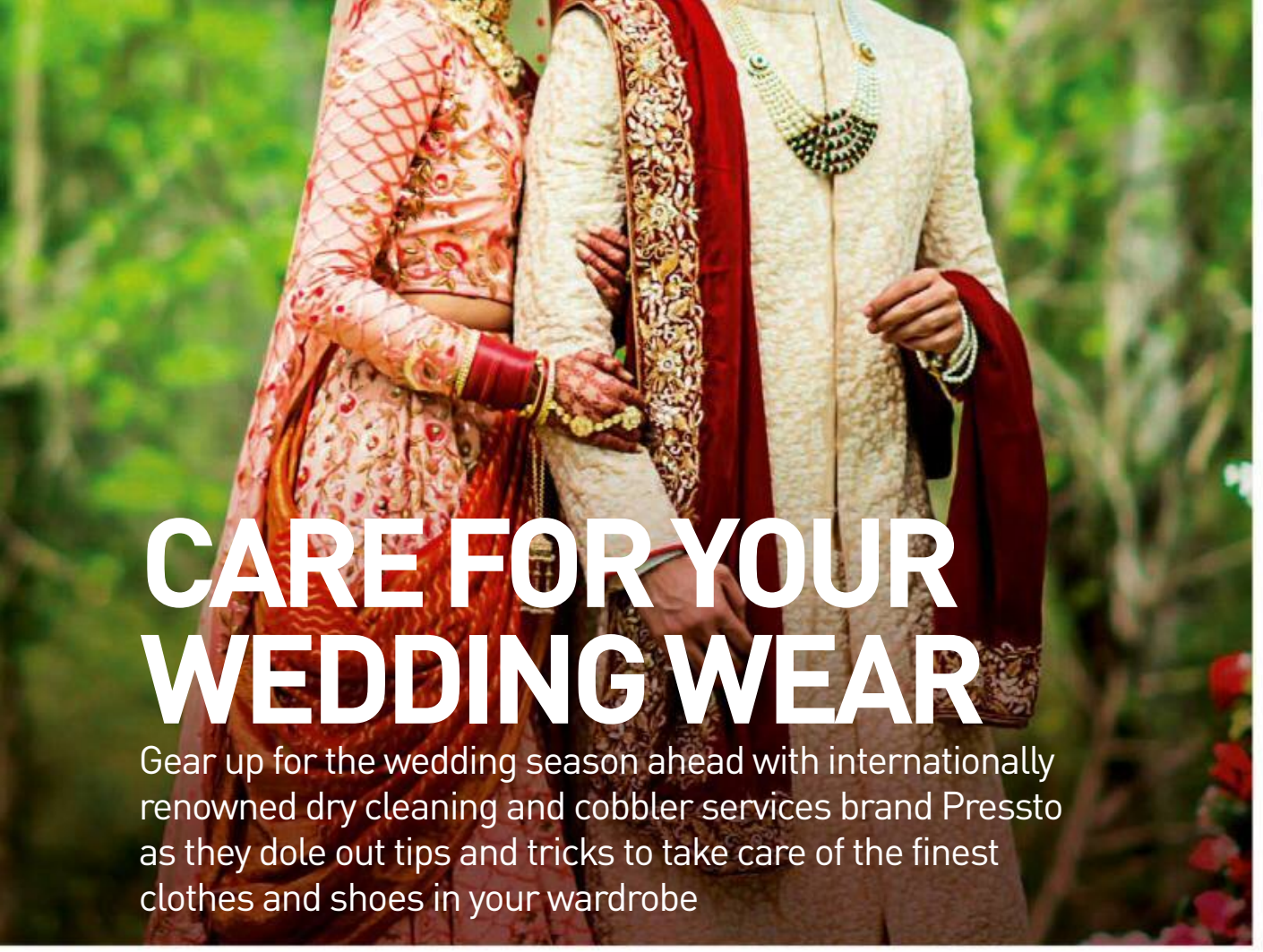
Because sometimes running errands requires a wild outfit.

JALEN GREEN

Brooklyn, July

Slinky, sexy, just-right flared trousers and disco-ball bling—this Balmain suit on the second overall pick is a downright fearless NBA draft-night look.

LAKEITH STANFIELD: ALBERTO PEZZALI. TILDA SWINTON: LIONEL HAHN. HARVEY KEITEL: LEON BENNETT. VIRGIL ABLOH: JEFF KRAVITZ/FILMMAGIC. JALEN GREEN: STEVE FREEMAN/NBAE. ALL: GETTY IMAGES. LUCAS HEDGES AND TOMMY DORFMAN: BROSNYC/BACKGRID.



CARE FOR YOUR WEDDING WEAR

Gear up for the wedding season ahead with internationally renowned dry cleaning and cobbler services brand Pressto as they dole out tips and tricks to take care of the finest clothes and shoes in your wardrobe

It is that time of the year when our social calendars are packed with wedding invites. And with a celebratory spirit in the air, the dawn of the wedding season also means you have to put your best foot forward, sartorially. But how often has it happened that you have a wedding to attend and at the very last minute you realise that your tuxedo has a stain, your kurta isn't pressed or the soles of your brogues are giving away? Fret not! To keep your prized possessions in tip-top condition, place your trust in renowned dry cleaning and cobbler services brand Pressto. Leave your dry cleaning woes to the experts and avail the Pressto dry cleaning service in Mumbai, Delhi-NCR and Bengaluru, while Cobbler by Pressto services can be availed in Mumbai and Bengaluru.

PRESSTO DRY CLEANING

With a number of party and wedding invitations, a tweed jacket, a woollen overcoat or a silk kurta is sure to be your best friend this season. But materials like wool and silk damage easily if washed, and hence, have to only be dry cleaned. While dry cleaning cleans the fabric by moving the solvents over the fabric, water expands the fabric and can therefore damage the material. But the real care starts at home, as soon as you wear a garment, says Esther Lennaerts, Founder and Director of Pressto Dry Cleaning and Cobbler. "Never store used garments. People usually store used garments and clean it only when it is time to wear it again. This causes the stains to penetrate into fabrics and then it is difficult to remove them," she says.

TO TAKE BETTER CARE OF YOUR GARMENTS, PRESSTO RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING TIPS:

- Keep silk sarees in a cotton cloth, the traditional way
- Do not leave your apparel completely covered; cover your apparel with breathable bags
- Never rub stains to remove them; use white absorbent paper towels instead
- Refold silk garments every three months to ensure they don't tear along the fold line
- Store woolens in a moth-proof garment bag and hang it on a wooden hanger for storage in your closet.

COBBLER BY PRESSTO

Have prolonged periods of nonusage resulted in wear and tear of your favourite pair of brogues? Worry not, for Cobbler's specialists have innovated a mechanism of lending your leather footwear that store-bought lustre and finesse. Whether it is dismantling your shoe's worn out sole, adding a heel tip, stretching out a tight pair or just giving them a good clean, the experts at Cobbler use a combination of foam and specialised cleaning agents to wash out all the dirt, dust, and grime, before giving them a good polish,

TO TAKE BETTER CARE OF YOUR SHOES, PRESSTO RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING TIPS:

- Treat and clean your leather shoes before the monsoons to prevent fungus from damaging your leather
- Store leather items in breathable bags
- Use shoe trees to keep out humidity and maintain the shape of the shoes
- Never continue using shoes when the heels or soles are damaged

pressto
Global Leader in Quality Dry Cleaning

COBBLER
The Royal Treatment by pressto

For more information, visit presstoindia.com or call 9167188355

Innovation, Perseverance and Passion-Driven by Legacy

FENESTA: INDIA'S NO.1 WINDOWS AND DOORS BRAND

A family-owned business established in the pre-independence era way back in 1889, DCM Shriram Ltd., is a global conglomerate with diverse business interests in Agri-Rural/Chloro-Vinyl and Value-Added Business. Fenesta is amongst the innovative ventures of the Rs. 8308 crore worth company, which rose to prominence by leading the path of development and innovation.

Fenesta Factory - Kota

A lot has changed in Indian homes since Fenesta made its foray into the **market 18 years** back with ready-to-install Windows and Doors. The brand has gone way beyond market and sales competitions changing people's perception of the ubiquitous Windows and Doors in their homes. It has shifted their focus to the importance of living spaces that shuts off the menace of all kinds of pollution. Tenacious and backed by science and eco-friendly practices, the brand brought about a profound makeover in people's lifestyle with far reaching impact on their health and wellness. The change was noticed, appreciated and won a million hearts. **Fenesta raises a toast to celebrate 18 years of innovation, customer love, and success!**

Traditionally, most homeowners would spend time and money on a selection of sanitaryware to kitchen amenities, but windows were always an afterthought. Earlier, all windows and doors were handmade and no carpenter could guarantee the quality and performance of the end product. Adding to the woes, vagaries of weather would take a toll on wood revealing chinks in the window and door frames. They would shrink in the monsoons, gradually fade and eventually lose their sheen.

When Fenesta drew up the plans to launch uPVC windows in India, it did not replicate European technologies. It took into account Indian climatic conditions that needed robust technology and advanced scientific inputs to address concerns of ultra-violet rays, tropical heat, monsoon storms, coastal winds, and 100% relative humidity to create products with India centric features for withstanding these extreme weather conditions.

PROTECTING MILLIONS OF HOMES AND COUNTING

Today, homes that have Fenesta windows are totally insulated from air, dust and noise pollution. Rainwater seepage especially through windows is a thing of the past. Significant energy savings was made possible, lowering electricity bills and reducing the carbon footprint. Add to these customized solutions, strength, exceptional durability, zero maintenance and round the year proactive service, a yardstick that windows are measured by today. Fenesta offers all these and much more, building lasting relationships with their customers.

INNOVATION, QUALITY AND PRECISION MERGE WITH NEW ALUMINIUM SERIES

After uPVC, Fenesta took another technological leap when it introduced its Ultra Luxury Aluminium Windows and Doors. Aluminium is a naturally green material - found in great abundance under the earth's surface. Aluminium also has great tensile and malleability properties and is 100% recyclable. Furthermore, the usage of aluminium as a replacement for wood in Windows and Doors reduces deforestation and global warming. Fenesta's Ultra Luxury Aluminium series is a style statement that enhances the luxury quotient of living spaces.

DOORS TO PEACE OF MIND

A novel product of the Fenesta portfolio is its elegant, state-of-the-art Internal Doors made of hybrid polymer that combines the aesthetics of wood and the durability of polymer. Available in four colours – White Oak, Natural Oak, Teak and Walnut, they come in plain and designer finish lending a stately look of a timber door. These doors are termite and water resistant; they do not expand or contract with temperature extremes the way wooden doors are prone to and also require negligible maintenance. Fenesta doors are available as ready-to-install integrated door solution systems, which include the frame, trim, panel, lockset, handle, hinges, stopper, buffer, transportation, installation and post sales service which makes them One Stop Door Solution. The hassle-free installation is done by well-trained company professionals. Fenesta also offers its customers prompt and comprehensive aftersales service, to ensure maximum peace of mind!

Internal Door

Today, Fenesta is reaching out to its customers in India and the subcontinent with a vast network of Dealers and Signature Studios. Fenesta has always been a customer centric organization enabling it to expand the brand footprint that covers 327+ cities with an impressive product portfolio offering more than 1000 design options to both retail and institutional customers.

A full-fledged, in-house customer service centre operates 365-days-a-year, offering assistance and resolving customer queries. Now customers can also visualise the windows for their living spaces through the AR enabled Fenesta APP and a 360 degree VR-enabled Studio walkthrough also helps customer experience the products in showroom like environment within the safety of their homes. The brand endeavours to make it more futuristic while adding newer technologies for better customer experience.

Aluminium Lift & Slide Door

Call: 1800 102 9880 (Toll Free) | 74286 91568
Visit: www.fenesta.com

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*T&C Apply.

THE CLINCH

The right clothes without fitting accessories are like Holmes without Watson: incomplete. Here's our round-up of the season's best to take your outfit from 'pretty great' to straight-up head-turner.

LOAFERS BY **SALVATORE FERRAGAMO.**

LOAFERS BY **PRADA.**

BOOTS BY **ALEXANDER McQUEEN.**

SHOES BY **CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN.**

BOOTS BY **TOD'S.**

SHOES BY **CANALI.**

BOOTS BY **BOTTEGA VENETA.**

RINGS BY **GUCCI.**

BRACELET BY **MEN OF PLATINUM.**

NECKLACE BY **DIOR MEN.**

RING BY **ALEXANDER McQUEEN.**

BRACELET BY **LOUIS VUITTON.**

BRACELET BY **HERMÈS.**

PHOTO: STUDIO DES FLEURS (HERMÈS BRACELET).

LEATHER TO LOVE

CARD HOLDER BY **PAUL SMITH.**

CARD CASE BY **RALPH LAUREN.**

WALLET BY **VERSACE.**

FLASK BY **DIOR MEN.**

BOLO TIE BY **PRADA.**

WALLET BY **ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA.**

BELTS

BELT BY **RALPH LAUREN** AVAILABLE AT **THE COLLECTIVE.**

BELT BY **FENDI.**

HARNESS BELT BY **GUCCI.**

BELT BY **HERMÈS.**

BELT BY **TOD'S.**

BELT BY **LOUIS VUITTON.**

PHOTO: STUDIO DES FLEURS (HERMÈS BELT).

A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME

Championing a revisionist approach for its latest launch, Swiss horologist Rado presents a new release in its iconic Captain Cook collection

Ever since its inception, Rado has consistently raised the bar when it comes to fine timepieces. Known for their technical virtuosity and superior craftsmanship, the brand is often regarded as the Master of Material, and rightfully so. Leading the industry by introducing high-tech, ultra-light high-tech, and colourful ceramics, Rado is arguably one of the most forward-thinking watchmakers in the world, flaunting a legacy of iconic timepieces – desired and coveted by watch connoisseurs and aesthetes alike. No wonder then, that their latest launch is a revisit to one of their classics from the archives – the Captain Cook. Journeying through time, *GQ* charts the iconic timepiece's illustrious history.

1962

THE ORIGINAL CAPTAIN COOK

Crafting history through craftsmanship, the very first Captain Cook made its debut in 1962. The iconic pivoting anchor symbol which Rado is so famed for, made its first appearance in the 1962 Captain Cook, featuring a black dial and bezel with an array of elements and signature materials that made the watch a roaring success.

2019

CAPTAIN COOK AUTOMATIC COLLECTION

Against the backdrop of all that rich history, Rado reinvented the iconic, legendary timepiece to fit a modern context. With an eye for enduring design, Rado's Captain Cook Automatic Collection brought all their milestone moments together for maximum impact. With a durable, high-tech ceramic inlay appearing in a glossy black finish, the watch flaunts a distinctive dial rife with elements that draw upon six decades of experience, reinvigorating a timeless classic.

2020

CAPTAIN COOK HRITHIK ROSHAN SPECIAL EDITION

Bigger, bolder, better. Launched in association with actor and brand ambassador Hrithik Roshan, the 2020 Captain Cook Hrithik Roshan Special Edition proved to be a unique style statement – by charting new territory in a vintage style. Boasting high-tech ceramics and sapphire crystal, the special edition is a reinterpretation of the original Captain Cook – giving it a distinctive and design-led update with modern materials. Given its durability and versatility, the Rado Captain Cook is a natural choice for modern explorers.

2021

CAPTAIN COOK HIGH-TECH CERAMIC

Perfectly encasing Rado's DNA, the brand unveils yet another masterpiece – the Captain Cook High-Tech Ceramic. The launch campaign reveals actor and brand ambassador Hrithik Roshan playing the modern explorer as he embraces the spirit of exploration and curiosity of the contemporary voyager. The new additions come in four unique looks and are the culmination of many years of research and development, marked by the history and tradition of the legendary Rado Captain Cook. Designed for the contemporary voyager with an urge to explore uncharted territories, this line features a sturdy high-tech ceramic monobloc case. Presented for the first time in a case size of 43mm, in four versions that'll make you spoilt for choice. A mesmerising wonder, the dial and case back are stunningly crafted in black tinted sapphire crystal allowing its wearer to explore and admire the inner workings of the skeletonised movement in a subtle manner, whilst still proving to be legible.

As the triangle on the bezel, the indexes, and the classic Captain Cook chunky arrow hands on the dial are filled with white Super- LumiNova® providing clear visibility in the dark. This magnificent sapphire dial is also home to the iconic Rado rotating anchor at 12 o'clock, and is protected by a chevé box sapphire crystal. Make your pick between a black high-tech ceramic case or a similar case with a rubber strap for an effortless look, or turn towards the brilliance of rose gold finishes set against a black high-tech ceramics case or a distinctive plasma high-tech ceramic case. Scratch-resistant and hypoallergenic, the watch runs on the premium Rado calibre R743, which lends it an 80-hours power reserve and water resistance up to 300m. The Captain Cook High-Tech Ceramic makes for an ideal choice for adventure-seekers, explorers and watch connoisseurs alike. Simply put, the Captain Cook High-Tech Ceramic collection not only embodies the true spirit of a modern explorer, but also serves as a timely reminder of Rado's unrivalled ingenuity.

For more information, visit rado.com

RADO
SWITZERLAND

1962

2019

2020

2021

It All Ties In

Accessory trends may ebb and flow, but the tie is still the *capo dei capi.* The post-pandemic resurgence of the classic is proof of its unwavering currency, believes Hermès creative director of men's silks, **Christophe Goineau.**

BY **SAUMYAA VOHRA**

***GQ*: Hermès ties have always been an iconic accessory. Where does the Hermès tie see itself now, in a post-pandemic world that has so deeply impacted the way we dress?**

Christophe Goineau: The role of the tie hasn't changed; it brings a touch of colour, elegance, style—and something that speaks to us. However, we have noticed that our customers come back with a strong desire for something new, with a twist. Over the last decade, we've seen the tie become a joyful accessory, one that you can change faster than ever according to your mood, wish, frame of mind…. With a return to a semblance of normalcy, 'outdoor clothing' returns.

***GQ*: What are your thoughts on how the tie will factor into that—will it stay a daily go-to? Be a marker of an occasion?**

CG: After spending many comfortable days in casual outfits, men enjoy feeling elegant, perhaps even a little more beautiful again! They return to 100% after months of being half hidden, showing only their upper body through cameras. They seem happy to jump back into shoes, trousers, belts, shirts, ties, jackets…. Of course, the tie is always present on special occasions—which is why we love it. It marks our lives; we always remember what tie we wore in our best moments.

***GQ*: Tell us a little about what an aficionado can expect from the current collection?**

CG: More and more novelties in design, materials, colours, or even shapes. The collection is richer to help find *the* tie made for you, that it's talking about you because it looks like you. We've played with materials by mixing leather and cashmere, some humorous details in the linings, or even old techniques brought up to date, like grenadine. We also played with the width of our ties, the 'Double 6 cm'—which is reversible, with two different prints.

***GQ*: Are there certain tie styles or motifs you see coming back? How has the tie evolved to what it looks like in 2021?**

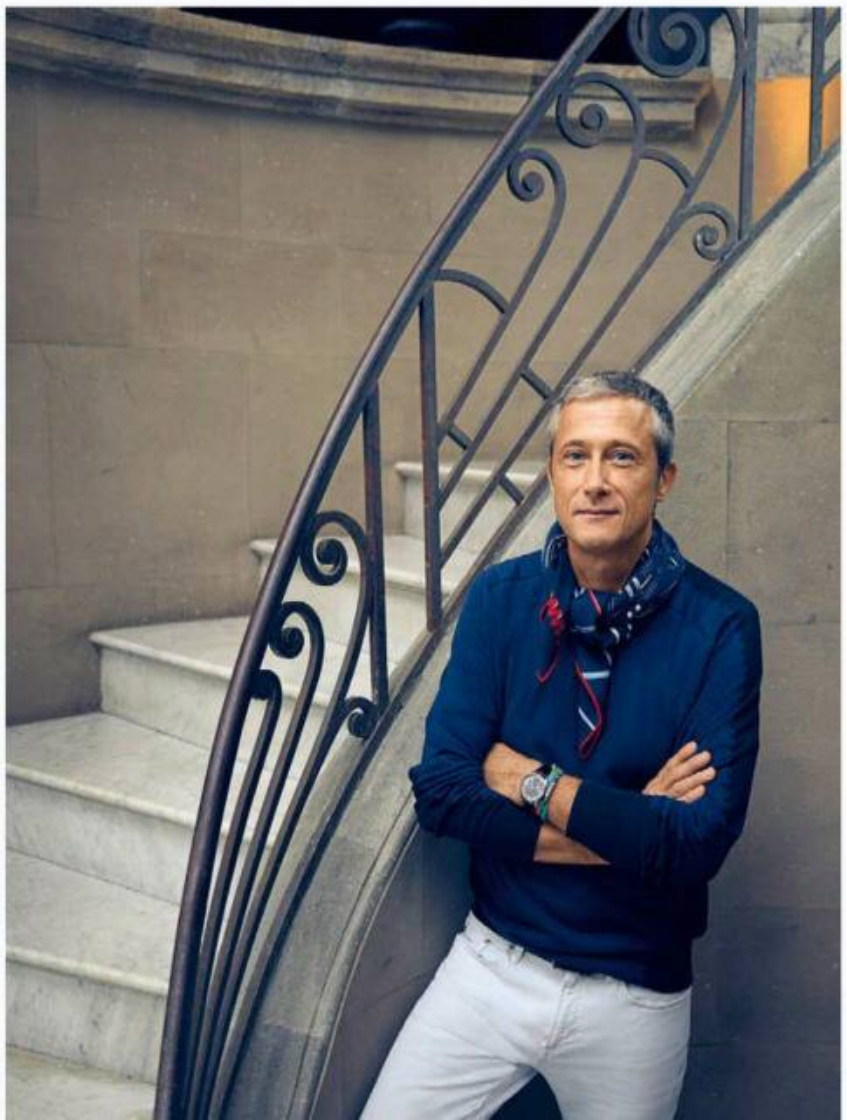
CG: There is a vast array of codes in fashion, and the tie is no exception. The way you connect your tie to your outfit is completely individual. Wearing a tie with a polo shirt, stripes on stripes, a knitted tie with a three-piece—what may have once been a faux pas is today, in many cases, an affirmation of personality. This is good news as it provides new opportunities!

***GQ*: What do you think a tie represents in 2021? What is that very particular something only a tie can bring to an ensemble?**

CG: We've been hearing since the '70s that the tie is done, but it hasn't faded out yet—even the pandemic failed to make it disappear. The tie is more than just a colourful piece of fabric. It is still the companion of the contemporary man, giving him the power to draw attention. When you first look at someone, you see the face and then immediately the tie, then you may start imagining his personality by the information the tie gives. Bright, funny, classic, or conservative—not many accessories give you that much insight into a person. It brings that distinctive touch of character and uniqueness.

***GQ*: Lastly, what other styles—outside of ties—from the Hermès men's silk universe do you believe add character to a formal look?**

CG: The collection is broad and varied. I enjoy seeing young men wearing a losange [scarf] as a tie. Or a very colourful carré worn with a classic jacket, and conversely a rectangle with a classic pattern on a biker jacket. The Hermès men's silk collection is there to reveal and unleash the fantasy of our wearers. GQ



PHOTOS: FERNANDO MARROQUIN (CHRISTOPHE GOINEAU); COURTESY OF HERMÈS.

TAKING THE ROAD LESS TRAVELLED

Fresh off the success of his recent film, *Chandigarh Kare Aashiqui*, filmmaker Abhishek Kapoor in conversation with *GQ*, delves deep into his cinematic journey, why he believes in reinventing himself with every project and his future plans

Your latest film *Chandigarh Kare Aashiqui* is celebrated for broaching an unexplored subject. Please take us through the film's journey...
I strongly feel that for any story to work, it should be promising at its very soul. All the frills and embellishments can only enhance it further. It wasn't hard for me to bring an authentic flavour in the film as I am a Punjabi. The tough part was to switch and rework my rhythm as a filmmaker to suit the treatment this narrative demanded. All my past works have been high on drama and intense emotions. Whereas this time around, we made a conscious choice to say something relevant to our times but also keep it relatable and entertaining at the same time. I firmly believe in the subliminal effect that films have on society. Even discussing transgenders has been considered a subject of taboo in the society we live in and while films can't break these long-cemented biases, they can help encourage the right conversations.

You had to shoot the film when the country was in a lockdown and the initial release date had to be pushed. Why was a theatrical release so essential?
I hadn't made a film in two years and it was just my time to tell this story. It was an instinctive call and fortunately, I found a crew and a set of actors as excited and willing to join me on this ride. It was like taking the road less travelled but we wanted to take the challenge head-on and when you get a passionate team together there ain't no mountain high enough. Speaking of the theatrical release, watching films in India is a community experience and I always envisioned the film to be an entertaining theatrical experience. We were convinced about our labour of love and decided to endure the long hiatus until people could get back to theatres.

You've chosen to explore vivid landscapes involving a range of stories while steering clear of sticking to any proverbial 'success' formula. Is delving into different worlds exciting for you?
I feel extremely fortunate to be doing what I do. Every film is an invaluable opportunity and I have seen failures so closely that I can never take anything for granted. Once I believe in the idea, everything else becomes the means to serve that idea better. Besides, I never wanted to set myself into a particular mould and become a genre director. With every new film, I've always tried to burn the traces of all my previous works to the ground and start from ground zero. That knack for reinvention has always been a subconscious choice. Apart from that, I'm well aware of the fact that my films are not just about me. If I keep recreating a so-called 'formula' then I'm only going to end up speaking to the same crowd over and over again which is doing a disservice to this blessed opportunity.

> **"I'VE ALWAYS TRIED TO BURN THE TRACES OF ALL MY PREVIOUS WORKS TO THE GROUND AND START FROM GROUND ZERO. THAT KNACK FOR REINVENTION HAS ALWAYS BEEN A SUBCONSCIOUS CHOICE."**

Fresh off the success of *Chandigarh Kare Aashiqui*, what does the road ahead look like to you?
A film's success brings you a sense of validation that amounts to the urge of raising the bar with your next film. As a production house, we are planning to expand across different horizons and hoping to create strides on OTT platforms. We're also planning to work with different directors and as producers, it's also essential to back the right visions that can do justice to the kind of clutter-breaking content we envisage to put out there.

In the 16 years of your journey as a director, you've only had 6 releases as you're someone who's known to devote yourself entirely to projects. Can you take us through that experience?
You know people often compare their films to their babies. Drawing the same analogy, I feel that the process of writing a film is quite like planning that baby and aligning your life in every way to prepare for that baby. That's where the magic lies. It gives me an unparalleled sense of high to get a scene right on paper. As a filmmaker, I like to work with people who are as dedicated to their work. So one has to level up their expertise and have all the answers they might seek about this world that's been blossoming in my head. Weaving together the story, layering it with subtexts, creating characters… the entire process gives me my 'WHY' behind making a film.

Your films have served to be a launchpad for some of the most celebrated talents in the industry. How do you approach the task of grooming new talents and how different was it working with a star this time around?
Introducing someone to this field takes tremendous responsibility as a filmmaker. Whether it's a star or a newcomer, they have to suit the part. Newcomers come with an immense amount of untapped enthusiasm that's waiting to burst out. You need to be their guide, leading them into this wonderland one step at a time and that requires unconditional trust and faith in each other. Stars on the other hand come with a lot of confidence and enjoy a certain reputation that inevitably rubs off on the film. Stars already have a perception in the eyes of their audience whereas in the case of newcomers you have to start from scratch. Apart from that, the process remains the same as far as my equation with my actors is concerned.

Music in your films has always enjoyed a separate fanbase. What's your secret?
The secret is to have this immaculate love for music and also your story. I like building up a soundscape for every film that can help one understand the story even if they just refer to the music in isolation. Music has the power to convey emotions that appeal to all audiences alike. People may not get the different layers and themes in the story but everyone gets music as it stirs up your soul. Apart from being a perfect fit to the story I'm trying to tell, they need to stand as bonafide clutter-breakers on the music charts even as an individual entity. I've had the chance to work with some of the most brilliant composers in the business and I feel that it all starts with inspiring them.

Watches Worthy of a Leading Man

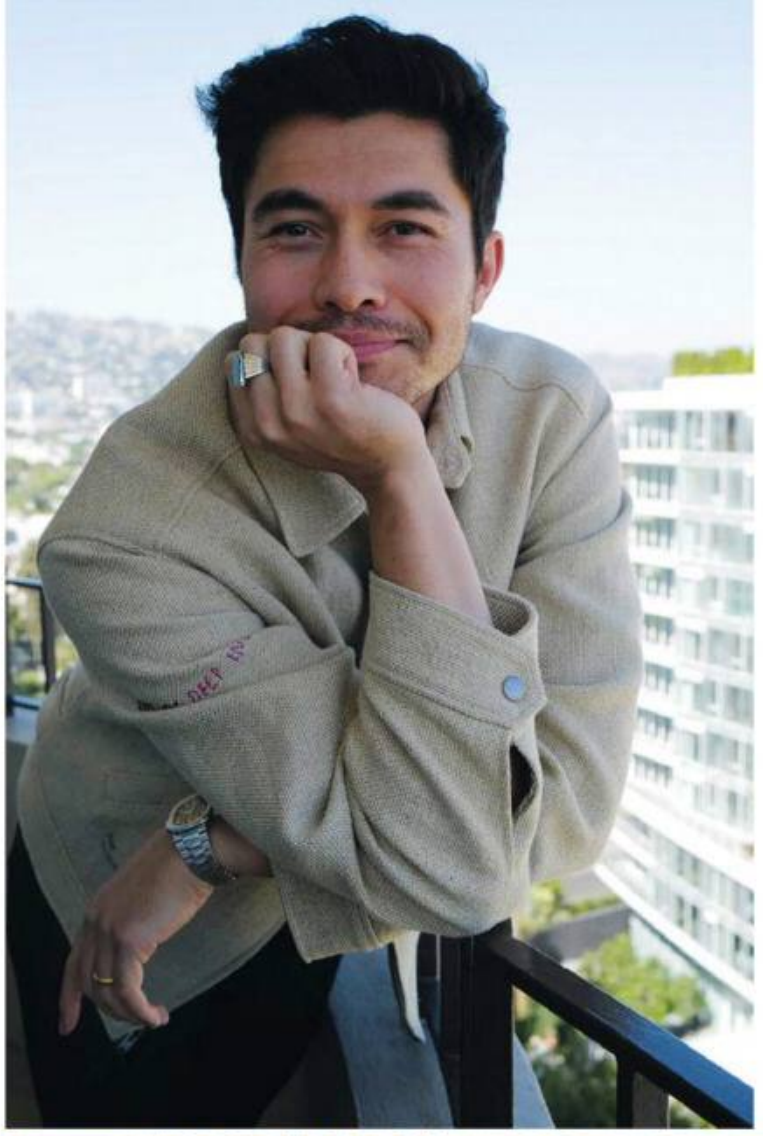
Henry Golding, who blew his first big paycheck on a Cartier Pasha, is looking for the next excuse to add to his collection.

Most watch enthusiasts get creative when they have to travel with their timepieces. On a recent afternoon, Henry Golding brought his growing collection to a Venice, California, coffee shop rolled inside ankle socks, which were stuffed in a Tumi toiletries case tucked inside an Arc'teryx tote bag. Not entirely surprising, considering the 34-year-old actor was once a travel-show host whose timepieces had to hold up to treks up the Mekong. In fact, the host gig fuelled his nascent watch obsession; Golding spent an entire season's paycheck buying his first luxury watch, a Cartier Pasha. "I wasn't too proud of that at the time," he says. And then he got his big break, a starring role in *Crazy Rich Asians,* and bought a Cartier Tank. **—CAM WOLF**

You have a very Cary Grant–esque persona, and all of your watches strike me as leading man watches. Were you conscious of that when building your collection?
You know what that is? It's classic-ness. We're talking about a day and age where leading men were stoic, brave, manly, but not toxic. Refined. Then in terms of the watch choices, these are the ones that will stand the test of time, that I will still be wearing in 30 years. I mean, the flashiest watch I own is the [Patek Philippe] Nautilus. A lot of people see that and are just like, "Eh." But the watch collector is like, "Oh, shit."

Do you have to think about the connotations of wearing a Nautilus before putting it on in the morning?
It's really bad to say this, but sometimes it is a power move to wear that watch. If you're going to these big meetings with CEOs, your watch is a statement. But taste in watches is much more powerful than the price of a watch. So for me to rock up to these crazy hedge-fund guys and I'm wearing my Nautilus, I feel like it garners more attention than having a blinged-out diamond-studded crazy thing on your wrist.

You also have a Cartier Tank, which is arguably one of the most classic designs of all time.
The Tank goes with everything. You could wear it casually or you can wear it with a tuxedo—it's just timeless. This one I got for the *Crazy Rich Asians* premiere. I'd always wanted this particular watch and an occasion to wear it. It's not too audacious; it's not too in your face. It's a gold watch, but it doesn't say, *Hey, look at me. I got a gold watch on.* It's classic.



Top and above: Golding showing off his "flashy" Patek Philippe Nautilus 5711. *Left:* Enjoying a pre-red-carpet meal wearing a Cartier Tank.

What do you think about how a lot of men are now wearing steel sports watches to formal events like red carpets?
Yeah, that's a big no-no. There are only a couple sports watches you can get away with wearing to a fancy event.

So you've got the holy grail watches covered with the Tank, a Rolex GMT, and a Nautilus—
To be honest, these are the ones that you want.

And then you have a relatively accessible watch in the Tudor Black Bay. What's the story there?
It's one of my favourite watches because my wife gave it to me on my wedding day. At the time I was still a travel host, so I needed something that I could go through the jungles with, I could go diving with. This was six months before *Crazy Rich Asians,* so this reminds me of a time when things were somewhat simpler, in a weird way. This represents another lifetime for me. So whenever I wear it, it grounds me and brings me back.

You consider trudging through the jungle to be a simpler life?
You would imagine it wouldn't be, but it was very different. GQ

PHOTOS COURTESY OF HENRY GOLDING.

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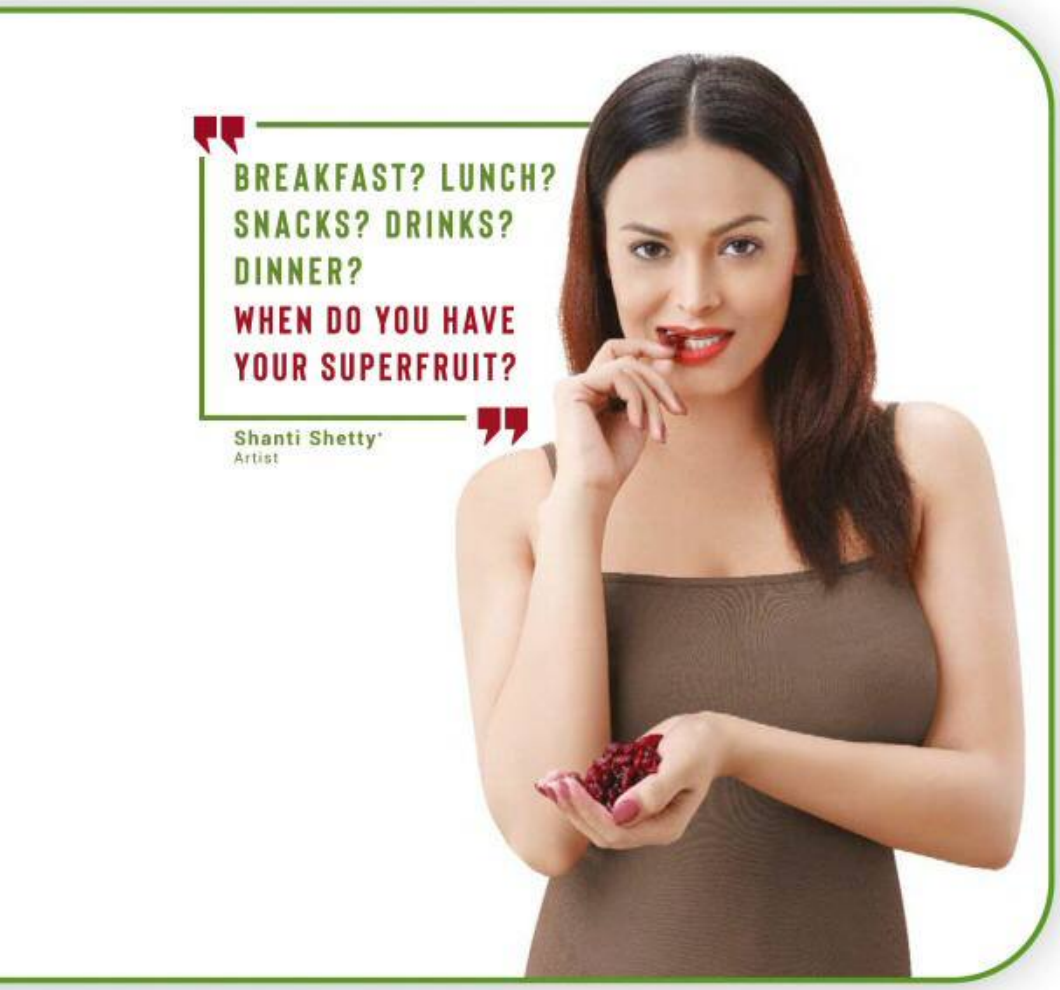

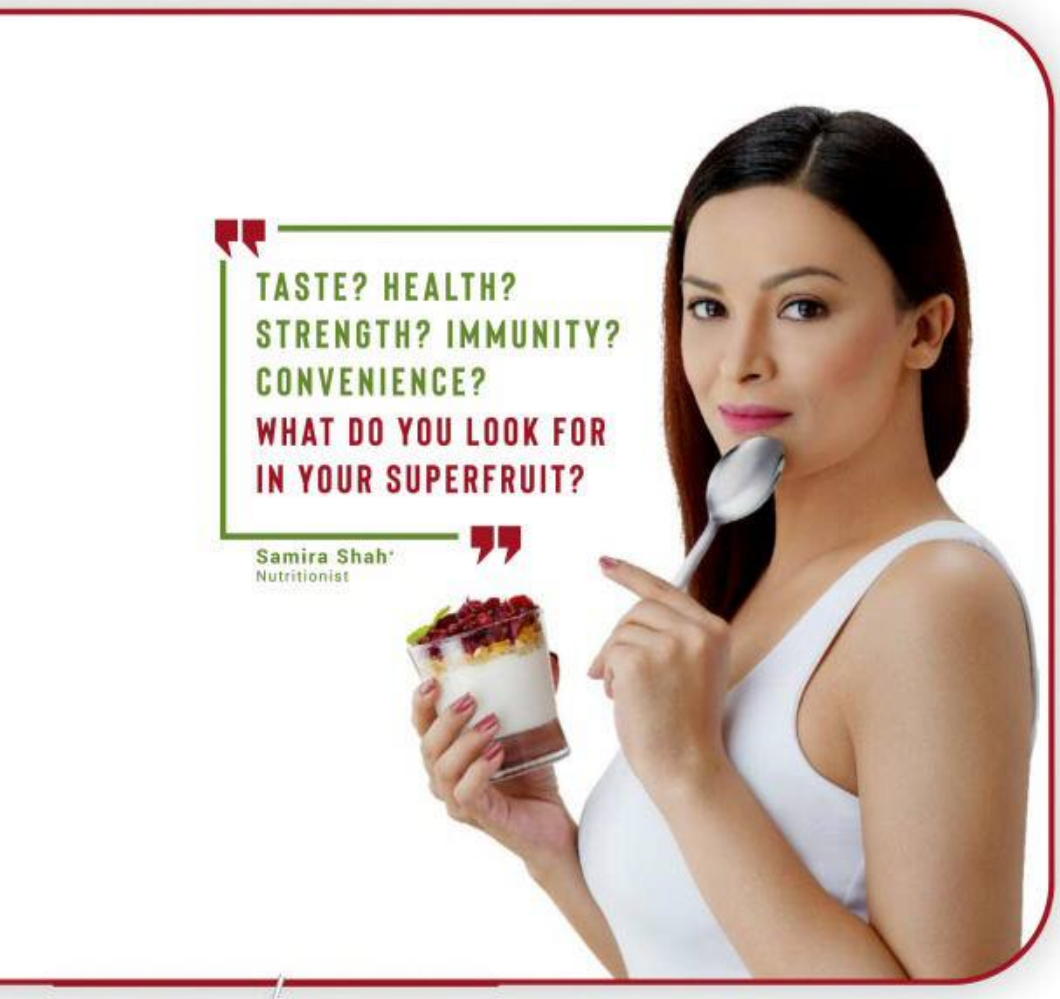

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THE FUTURE OF SUSTAINABLE FASHION

Fashion designers, shutterbugs, models, and content creators — the second edition of Blenders Pride Fashion Tour's 2020-21 talent hunt, The Showcase, was rife with raw talent that proved to be a looking glass into the future of sustainable fashion. *GQ* shines the spotlight on the four lucky winners of the nationwide competition that has established itself as the most definitive voice in the world of Indian fashion

In an association for the ages, powerhouses Blenders Pride Fashion Tour and Fashion Design Council of India (FDCI) collaborated to bring the second edition of The Showcase to life, which served to be a peek into the future of fashion—creative, chic, and conscious. Perhaps fashion's most asked question is how to transition towards a sustainable future and to answer this burning question, Blenders Pride Fashion Tour points to a pioneering direction through The Showcase 2021. Nurturing the idea of 'reuse, repurpose, and reinvent', the show was anchored with the meaningful theme of 'My Planet, My Pride'.

Like always, it was an opulent affair, rife with industry stalwarts and raw talent paving the way to a world with a conscience. As an authoritative voice in the industry, Blenders Pride serves to be an eminent platform where the next generation of fashion designers, shutterbugs, models and content creators catapult their career journey by showcasing their talents. While the concept of sustainability was articulated throughout the show, collaborative effort was seen in the 10 teams of four contestants including designers, models, shutterbugs, and content creators who came together to bring to spotlight their creations helmed by eco-conscious philosophies, mentored by the leading names in fashion: Amit Aggarwal, Anju Modi, JJ Valaya, Namrata Joshipura, Rahul Mishra, Shantanu & Nikhil, Suneet Varma, Abraham & Thakore, Rina Dhaka, Anamika Khanna and Tarun Tahiliani. While the mentor panel included the trailblazers of the industry, the jury did too, feature the crème-de-la-crème of fashion—Chairman of FDCI, Sunil Sethi; actor and style icon Neha Sharma; designer extraordinaire Gaurav Gupta; content creator Masoom Minawala; celebrity stylist Shaleena Nathani; and Bollywood's leading shutterbug Rahul Jhangiani.

Urbasi Chowdhury

Ishpreet Kaur

Tanay Babbar

Naushad Ali

The teams of aspirants from each category together created beautiful ensembles, a final fashion film and social media content that echoed their individuality and unique sense of style. Naushad Ali, Fashion Designer; Ishpreet Kaur, Model; Tanay Babbar, Fashion Shutterbug; and Urbasi Chowdhury, Content Creator gained the coveted spots of the tour's winners, along with an opportunity to showcase their work in the next edition of Blenders Pride Fashion Tour, the winners will also benefit from a long-term association with the Fashion Design Council of India and a cash prize.

Let's hear it from the winners themselves:

NAUSHAD ALI, FASHION DESIGNER

For fashion designer Naushad Ali who is based out of Pondicherry, winning the second edition of The Showcase was a defining moment in his career even as he describes the entire experience as 'wholesome'. The designer who launched his own label in 2015, has a minimalist aesthetic and has been working with artisans in India, to showcase the incredibly rich traditional techniques that India as a country has to offer. Talking about his journey, Ali says, "I was fortunate to have extremely talented team members alongside me who made this possible. It was also a great opportunity to be mentored by the stalwarts of the industry such as Mr. Sunil Sethi and Abraham & Thakore. I am looking forward to the journey that lies ahead of me."

ISHPREET KAUR, MODEL

From registering for the second edition of the talent hunt to being declared a winner, winning The Showcase at the Blenders Pride Fashion Show was nothing short of a magical experience for Ishpreet Kaur, an aspiring model from New Delhi. But it wouldn't have been possible without the support of her parents who always encouraged her to follow her dreams and gave her the courage and confidence to be who she was. "Being part of The Showcase has been an empowering journey. Getting mentored by industry experts has played an intrinsic role and I am grateful for the experience that the platform has given me."

TANAY BABBAR, FASHION SHUTTERBUG

With the hope that winning the second edition of 'The Showcase' would be a turning point in his career, Tanay Babbar, a fashion photographer from New Delhi says that he is grateful to the Blenders Pride Fashion Tour and FDCI for appreciating his talent and hard work. "Being mentored by the biggest names in the fashion industry such as Abraham & Thakore has been nothing short of a dream and their creative direction helped my team develop the concept for the final film. I will always cherish the journey and the bond that I have created with my teammates," the shutterbug shares.

URBASI CHOWDHURY, CONTENT CREATOR, MUMBAI

Urbasi Chowdhury from Mumbai has been creating content in the fashion and lifestyle space for over eight years. So when she decided to participate in the talent hunt, she was most excited about getting to work with the biggest names in the industry and collaborating with other creators from diverse fields. While calling it the most fulfilling and enriching experience in her life, Chowdhury says, "It seems like eight years of passionately and consistently curating content around lifestyle and fashion has finally displayed its worth. Right from being shortlisted amongst the top 10 content creators, to being mentored by the dignitaries in the industry to working with the finest creators from diversified fields, this journey has certainly been an exciting roller coaster ride and I can't wait to see how the future unfolds."

Coming a close second the first runner-up team included designer Ada Mali from Mumbai, model Kanishka Maheshwari from Bareilly, shutterbug Shreyans Dungarwal from Hyderabad and content creator Aria Krishnamurti from Hyderabad. The second runner-up team comprised designer Sreegokul Viswanath from Kannur, model Aniwarya Pawar from Mumbai, shutterbug Pratim Shankar from Mumbai and content creator Shriya Kandude from Hyderabad.

For more information, follow @blenderspridefashiontour on Instagram

FLYING SPECTRE

The Longines Spirit Titanium is the most grounded pilot's watch of the season.

As a watch brand, Longines has plenty going for it. It's the fifth-largest Swiss watch brand in the world; has an organic, long-standing association with equestrian sports; and has been an official timekeeper of the Olympics and the Commonwealth Games on multiple occasions. A sense of timeless, old-world elegance informs their design, putting the brand in league with the all-time greats. Then there's also Longines' tryst with aviation—one that goes all the way back to the days of Charles Lindbergh, with whom Longines partnered to create the Hour Angle Watch. When Lindbergh undertook his solo transatlantic flight, it was Longines that timed the event, from his departure from New York to landing in Paris, to a grand welcome. With such a storied past, Longines does not necessarily have to take the trouble of introducing a new line of watches when it can so easily piggyback on the designs of previous collections—as is the norm. And yet, they chose to launch the new Spirit collection last year, at a time when many brands were hedging their bets. This year they've added to that collection one of the best looking pilot's watches of the season.

It's called the Longines Spirit Titanium, named after Lindbergh's famous continent-hopping aircraft: the Spirit of St. Louis. Right off the bat, with its big lugs and polished crown, it emanates the old-school design values that the brand is renowned for. Sometimes it's the simplest designs that are the most impactful. And this three-handed, dark-dial piece, with its brushed surfaces and polished accents, does that better than several busy-looking aviator watches out there. Previously available in stainless steel, the new titanium editions add much-needed lightness to the Spirit's list of attributes.

Available in 40- and 42-mm editions, the Spirit now gets a case and a screwed caseback made of grade 5 titanium, which adds a lustre to the case that stainless steel simply cannot impart. The black, sandblasted anthracite face of the dial has a fairly clutter-free appearance, drawing the eye to the five gold-coloured stars and the winged hourglass logo above them. There isn't even a date window breaking through the surface, which, in today's age of over-informative timepieces, marks a refreshing change of pace. Underneath the dial lies an in-house, COSC-certified, magnetic resistant L8888.4 calibre, which comes with a 72-hour power reserve. To throw in an added layer of functionality, the watch is also water-resistant up to 100 metres.

The Longines Spirit Titanium is an interesting counterpoint to the subdial-festooned aviation watches out there. Its focus on clean, good looks and robust architecture separates it from the pack, and makes it a far more effective dress watch. For a more formal look, you can opt for the polished titanium bracelet, but we prefer the black anthracite-woven nylon strap that goes better with the dial's texture and gives the Spirit a more rugged, vintage look. Both options get an interchangeable, quick-release system so you can switch straps without the need for tools.

A vintage-inspired, no-date pilot's watch is a formidable sartorial accessory, particularly if you've got a penchant for bomber jackets. The Spirit Titanium is usable and tough enough to qualify as a great everyday watch. Even in the jet age, this vestige of pre-war aviation continues to have unending appeal. GQ

WORDS: PARTH CHARAN. PHOTOS COURTESY OF LONGINES.

LOOKING THROUGH THE GLASS

It's not often that Jaquet Droz takes the minimalist route; but when it does, the results are spectacular.

For several watch brands, an openwork tourbillon represents the best in design and engineering that they can offer. For Jaquet Droz, however, it's just another day at the office. Celebrated for its ornate and colourful automatons, placed on enamel-coated dials, the watchmaker simply cannot be matched in terms of visual extravagance. And yet, this time, their biggest launch of the year takes the opposite approach to dial design. The Grande Seconde Skelet-One Tourbillon's primary task is to use the minimum amount of material and yet achieve the greatest amount of structural rigidity and transparency.

Introduced back in 2018, the Skelet-One took the Grande Seconde series' signature design elements—such as the 8-shaped, overlapping subdials—and gave it a multi-tiered, three-dimensional treatment. The latest addition to the series has a more symmetrical skeletal dial than previous iterations did. Even the tourbillon cage is designed in such a way that it does not disrupt the watch's symmetry. Rather, it blends in with its skeletal framework, aligning itself perfectly with the bridges, once every minute. The movement comes with a seven-day power reserve, features 30 jewels, and is water-resistant up to 30 metres—though the black alligator strap isn't.

The Grande Seconde Skelet-One Tourbillon is not a watch you merely glance at. Housed inside a 41-mm, 18-carat red-gold case, it's a watch that draws you in and encourages you to hold it up against the light and marvel at the minutiae of its design. It may not feature the lacquered surfaces or flying birds that have become the brand's visual trademark, but it's every bit the sculptural masterpiece that Jaquet Droz automaton-sporting timepieces are. GQ

WORDS: PARTH CHARAN. PHOTO COURTESY OF JAQUET DROZ.

THE NEW WAVE OF GROOMING

Looking for the perfect self-care routine? Uncle Tony's dedicated kits address all your grooming needs with ease

High quality ingredients, result-driven formulas, and state of the art packaging...wellness brand Uncle Tony's products are a class apart. Made in France with the finest ingredients by expert cosmeticians with 30 years of experience, Uncle Tony's products address all your grooming needs and are easy to use. "Uncle Tony is an unassuming skincare brand with simple and effective products for men who aren't skincare buffs," says founder Udit Goyal. So, if you're looking to introduce some powered-up, easy-to-use products to your routine, make your pick from the brand's dedicated array of kits that serve the purpose with excellence and expertise.

BATH AND BODY KIT

If you're doing it correctly, a carefully curated self-care regimen can be an energising and uplifting tool with which to enrich your day. If you're looking to elevate your grooming routine with an all-encompassing self-care regimen – the Bath and Body Kit by Uncle Tony checks all the boxes. Made with the finest ingredients in Provence, France, the kit comprises of a shampoo and a shower gel imbued with a refreshing French fragrance to help you kickstart your day feeling great.

SKINCARE SUPREME KIT

The modern man's grooming routine consists of more than just the basics and a surefire way to upgrade your grooming routine is to indulge in the works – from a purifying cleanser to a replenishing moisturiser. This, you'll be pleased to know, is all incredibly easy with the Skincare Supreme Kit by Uncle Tony. Right from an oil controlling skin cleanser and an exfoliating face scrub, to a hydrating mask and purifying moisturizer serum with soothing marine extracts – the kit has everything you need for an easy skincare regimen.

COMPLETE STARTER PACK

There's something rather ritualistic about a shaving routine – and there's nothing better than a perfect shave. With Uncle Tony's Complete Starter Pack, achieve that perfect, covetable finish with 2 German blade cartridges each featuring a 5-blade system and precision trimmer, along with an aloe and menthol shaving foam that facilitates a smooth, close shave. The kit also comprises an Uncle Tony razor in the colour of your choice and a free blade!

COMPLETE BEARD KIT

If you're on a perpetual journey to find the best routine for that glorious beard – look no further than Uncle Tony's complete beard kit. With a dedicated array of products, the kit elevates your beard game through a beard oil, beard wash, and moustache wax – all made from the finest ingredients in Provence, France. What's more, is that it comes with a beard comb, too, for those looking for a quick fix on-the-go.

UNCLE
TONY

For more information, visit uncletony.com or follow @uncletonyindia on Instagram

NOIR HERO

The TAG Heuer Aquaracer Professional 300 "Nightdiver" is the deep-sea companion you never knew you needed.

&FYI

THE WHITE LUMINESCENT DIAL IS A NOD TO THE TAG HEUER GLOWING DIALS FROM THE 1980S.

A few months ago, TAG Heuer released its new, refreshed Aquaracer Professional 300 range—a series of luxury tool watches, originally introduced in 2004, that have been modernized over time, to include new materials like carbon, titanium, and ceramic. Last month, it added three new models to the collection, with a monochrome version serving as its breakout star. The brand calls these "faithful updates", which is shorthand for "tribute watches that don't tread any new ground in terms of design". After all, why fix what isn't broken?

First introduced in the mid-1980s, the TAG Heuer "Nightdiver" was a matt-black stealth diver that became an overnight sensation. In the sea of "look at me" sport watches of that era, the Nightdiver dared to fly under the radar. The new one is no different. It gets the same 12-sided, unidirectional rotating bezel, screw-down crown, and double safety clasp as the original. TAG's design, engineering, and heritage teams have come together to create an unapologetically understated timepiece. The stainless-steel case, bezel, crown, caseback, and clasp are all coated in matt-black DLC, with an engraved and fully luminescent dial receiving a generous coating of Super-LumiNova. Even the hands and applied baton indices get black gold-plating, coated with white Super-LumiNova for greater visibility when you're in the depths of the ocean (the watch is water-resistant up to 300 metres).

If the word "Professional" in the name wasn't enough of a clue, the engraving on the caseback is a dead giveaway that this watch is designed for expert divers. It features a diving helmet with a 12-sided faceplate fashioned after the watch's bezel. The stealthy, monochrome look, aided by a black rubber strap, may not do much for its wearability outside the ocean, but for hardcore tool-watch collectors and deep-sea explorers, the Nightdiver is a must-have. GQ

WORDS: PARTH CHARAN. PHOTO COURTESY OF TAG HEUER.

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IN THE SPIRIT OF CELEBRATIONS

Returning for its 13th edition, the GQ Men Of The Year awards celebrates and honours accomplished individuals who have shaped the world's cultural landscape in style, entertainment and sport throughout 2021. An annual extravaganza, *GQ* has over the last 13 years shone the spotlight on enterprising faces that have led by example, acknowledging and honouring their tireless endeavours to effect change across various industries. But 2021 will always be remembered as the year we bounced back from the pandemic – the year of the great awakening, the year of profound individual accomplishment. And, it is only fitting that the theme for Men of the Year 2021 is '**Year of the Brave**'.

And joining hands with us in this initiative to raise a toast to 2021's most illustrious personalities is our long-standing, unwavering partner – Chivas, the official title sponsor for Men Of The Year property ever since its inception in 2008. Touted as the pinnacle in the world of fine luxury, Chivas needs no introduction. And, Chivas's partnership with *GQ* has not just solidified but also grown manifold as their brand philosophy 'Made of Great Character' resonates with *GQ*'s philosophy of honouring the winners who have been shortlisted not only for their excellence, but also for their courage in challenging convention, and leading by example. As the dynamic duo readies itself to host yet another successful edition of the highly- anticipated Men Of The Year awards, *GQ* takes a walk down memory lane and serves up a healthy helping of nostalgia by throwing it back to some of the best Men Of The Year moments from the decade gone by.

Catch the XV winners of #MOTY2021 on *GQ* India's social media platforms

Russell Peters

Aamir Khan & John Travolta

Vicky Kaushal

Amitabh Bachchan

Ranveer Singh

Anushka Sharma

Ayushmann Khurrana

Bhumi Pednekar

Katrina Kaif

Maluma

Saif Ali Khan

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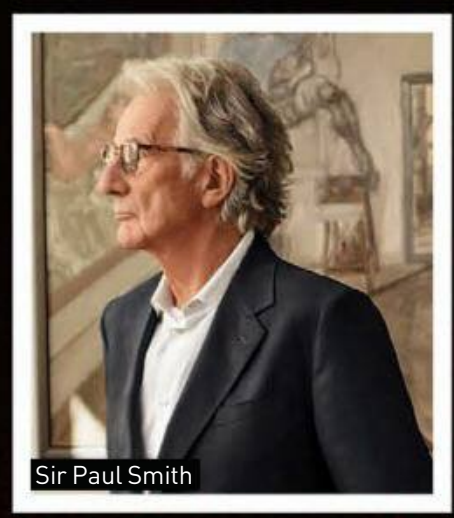
Shahid Kapoor & Hrithik Roshan


Sir Paul Smith

Deepika Padukone & Karan Johar

Hasan Minhaj

2019

Shah Rukh Khan

LIBERATING CINEMA

PHOTOS COURTESY OF AMAZON PRIME VIDEO.

When the producers of the Tamil film *Soorarai Pottru* decided to release it on Amazon Prime Video last November—amid shuttered cinemas and an enraged Tamil Nadu Theatre and Multiplex Owners' Association—its director was not the happiest person. Sudha Kongara felt that several rousing moments in her movie, which would have been otherwise boisterously celebrated in the cinemas with religious awe, would be lost in the solitude of domestic viewership.

She now says, in retrospect, the OTT (over-the-top) platform was the best thing that happened to the film. It went across borders, got dubbed in many languages, and earned a respectable IMDB rating.

Kongara's desire got fulfilled two months later when three shows of the film were held at the Chennai International Film Festival. She experienced every vociferous reaction from the crowd that she had anticipated. "I got my closure," she says, laughing. "Now I have actors from [film industries across the country]—Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Hindi—asking me to make films. How could it have been possible if not for streaming?"

Soorarai Pottru is just one of several films that were released straight on a streaming platform over the last year and a half because a theatrical release was not possible. Major stars like Suriya, also one of the producers of *Soorarai Pottru,* and Dhanush, who was sitting on big-budget films, bowed down to streaming services rather than wait for better times—in part due to growing pressure from financiers. Blockbuster films like Vijay's *Master* got the frenzied reaction in cinemas—the first major Tamil release of 2021, in January—but also raked up the numbers when it released online.

The power of choices, ease of discoverability, and range of content have led viewers down unfamiliar routes. Even Telugu films found a place in shared watch lists between friends, while Malayalam cinema's Fahadh Faasil became a pan-India favourite. What Bong Joon-Ho, the director of Korean Oscar-winner, *Parasite,* said less than two years ago, came true: "Once you overcome the one-inch-tall barrier of subtitles, you will be introduced to so many more amazing films."

While streaming services shy from giving numbers, the success of films released straight to the web can be gauged anecdotally—and by following the chatter on social media. Backhanded compliments come in the form of remakes—the most obvious form of flattery. *Soorarai Potru* is being made in Hindi, directed by Kongara, despite already having a Hindi-dubbed version, titled *Udaan*.

Netflix's Tamil anthology series *Navarasa,* co-produced by Mani Ratnam, was in 10 countries' top 10 lists including Malaysia and Sri Lanka. In its first week, more than 40% of viewers were from outside the country. Another Tamil film, *Jagame Thandhiram,* was subtitled and dubbed in English, Spanish, French, and Portuguese. In the last year, Martin Prakkat's *Nayattu* (Malayalam), Praveen Kandregula's *Cinema Bandi* (Telugu), V. Vignarajan's *Andhaghaaram* and Madonne Ashwin's *Mandela* (both Tamil), and anthologies *Pitta Kathalu* (Telugu) and *Paava Kadhaigal* (Tamil) have all featured in the top 10 in India.

"The growth of streaming services in India provides a massive opportunity for new talent to share their stories with the world. We are excited to have stories by a new generation of incredibly talented stars and storytellers from South India," says Pratiksha Rao, director of original films and licensing for Netflix India.

Soorarai Pottru

Streaming services in the pandemic provided a long-overdue boost for regional Indian films cutting across borders.

BY **ARUN JANARDHAN**

Some of the more prominent movies on Amazon Prime Video include *The Great Indian Kitchen, Joji,* and *Drishyam 2* (all Malayalam); and Tamil movies *Karnan* and *Master,* which topped IMDB's list of most popular films and web series of 2021. Prime Video has programmed films in nine Indian languages, including Marathi, Bengali, and Gujarati. Disney+ Hotstar got the Telugu film *Maestro* and the multilingual *Annabelle Sethupathi,* besides *Mookuthi Aman* and *November Story,* a Tamil film and series respectively, among others.

"We've got a market that's incredibly complex," says Sushant Sreeram, director of marketing for Amazon Prime Video in India. "Yet, irrespective of what part of the country our users come from, they are all bound by a single thread: their desire to watch content that is local in flavour and global in appeal with immersive universes and superlative production values."

Nandini Ramnath, film editor at Scroll.in, says that in the absence of reliable data it is hard to tell whether the audiences for non-Hindi films included Hindi speakers. "It is also not easy to know whether, say, the latest Malayalam movie is attracting viewers beyond the linguistic group for which it is meant. But the sheer volume of such films, in part due to the coronavirus pandemic and the fact that they are being heavily marketed and promoted, can only mean that the streamers are reaching out to a bigger audience pool."

Film-makers soon disovered that, with OTT platforms, they could tell a story in 30-minute episodes or make a 20-minute short film or even a 90-minute feature. "I learnt a lot from editing; it helped me hone my skills in story selection and choice of content. The content differs for theatrical and OTT audiences. The run time of *C U Soon* was 92 minutes because the viewer had a remote in his hand, while *Malik,* made for a theatrical experience, is 158 minutes long," says Mahesh Narayanan, who wrote and directed both films.

Streaming services offer more creative freedom compared to conventional cinema, allowing film-makers to push the envelope in exploring social issues. "A lot of film-makers experience the freedom [from] censorship or of language or expression of ideas and for us, on top of all these, was the fact I could go beyond Hindi and still serve the whole country," says Raj Nidimoru, one half of the Raj-D.K. combo, who created the Amazon Prime show *The Family Man*.

While the first season had Tamil actor Priyamani and Malayalam cinema's Neeraj Madhav, the second season had Tamil-Telugu actress Samantha Akkineni in a pivotal role.

While a large number of products remain agnostic to the medium—and could release on OTT platforms even if originally made for theatres—film-making grammar changed for streaming services. Post-production processes have altered to make viewing adaptable to a laptop, TV, or smartphone because the sound has to be effective irrespective of the device.

Unlike waiting for box-office returns to validate a film's success—or failure—the reaction is immediate. Narayanan mentions how, on the night that *C U Soon* released, he was discussing what to do next with his lead actor Faasil when their phones started buzzing. "Audiences globally began calling, even at odd hours. It was only then we realized that movies in OTT too could become hits and have such a huge reach," he says.

There are algorithms that provide details after 30 days to understand how well a film has done. Cinematic releases follow a slightly longer process to produce results, starting with reviews, word of mouth, and then the box office. "We always believe cinema was born from the theatres. Any film-maker would want their film to be on a bigger screen, of course, for larger-than-life experiences. This reach is new to the industry," says producer Rajsekar Pandian of 2D Entertainment, who has four films lined up for OTT platforms, including *Raame Aandalum Raavane Aandalum* and *Oh My Dog.*

What streaming services have done, everyone agrees, is create a level playing field. Indian audiences have warmed up to content in Spanish, Korean, and Italian, and even stories in Marathi and Kannada among others. "People also discover what catches their eye later," says Nidimoru. "They don't stick to the same content because a Korean show is nudging you, so you switch to that. Or if a Malayalam film everyone is talking about is next to *The Family Man*, you want to watch it too."

The success of shows like *Money Heist*—or indeed Hollywood movies over generations—proves that cultural differences do not matter to the viewer. In the well-reviewed Tamil film *Sarpatta Parambarai,* Anupama Kumar's performance as the lead actor Arya's screaming, hysterical mother grates just 15 minutes into the film.

"One of the most lauded scenes in *Soorarai Pottru,*" says Kongara, "is when [Suriya] goes back after his father's death and is trying to get money at the airport. His mother abuses him while beating her chest. That is a loudly emotive scene but that's how women from Madurai behave. It works because the core emotion is what you are relating to. The way it's performed becomes secondary."

"Whenever I start working on a script or story," says Jeethu Joseph, whose *Drishyam* spawned a sequel and remakes in multiple languages, "I first understand the need to do justice to the content and the genre it will be presented in. I never think of other languages or regional tastes because it's hard to bring different perspectives and tastes into that particular subject."

The success of *Drishyam*, he adds, is owed to the universality of the subjects: family relationships, the battle of the weak against the system and against the powerful.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF AMAZON PRIME VIDEO.

Joji

Drishyam 2

Raame Aandalum Raavane Aandalum

The Family Man

C U Soon

"Irrespective of what part of the country our users come from, they are all bound by a single thread: their desire to watch content that is local in flavour and global in appeal."

If Tamil and Telugu cinema can be over the top, Malayalam is at the other end of the spectrum. In Jeo Baby's *The Great Indian Kitchen,* a newly-wed bride, played by Nimisha Sajayan, tries to settle into her husband's home. The honeymoon period slowly gets replaced by daily chores and adapting to the joint family's rigid notions of religion and tradition. The monotony and claustrophobia of her life come through in repeated sequences of cooking and washing dishes as Sajayan's progressive character slowly suffocates amidst the patriarchy. Understated and subtle, the film transports the viewer into the kitchen of any middle-class household.

If Malayalam cinema seems to be leading the race in a post-pandemic world of online viewing, nobody from the film-making industry in Kerala is particularly surprised. "Yes, surveys indicate a growing number of non-Malayali viewers for Malayalam content," says Narayanan. "A lot of young directors like Lijo Jose Pellissery (*Jellykettu*), Dileesh Pothan (*Joji*), and others are creating niche audiences. The subjects chosen are mostly rooted in the local milieu and I think that sets them apart. OTTs have also brought about changes in writing and scene composition."

Known for always working on low budgets and with robust storylines, the industry's biggest problem was reaching audiences all over the world—a challenge that now seems to be resolving.

"The Malayalam industry was always like this," says actor Tovino Thomas, whose *Kaanekkaane* dropped recently on Sony LIV and who will have *Minnal Murali* playing on Netflix soon. "They got the pulse of the audience. There is a new wave [of film-makers] in perfect intervals here, I believe."

Thomas says this ability to work with limited budgets served the industry well because they could shoot amid lockdown restrictions, citing the examples of *The Great Indian Kitchen* and his own *Kala,* promoted as "the feel-bad film of the year". The *Kala* climax was shot in one shift, he adds, shooting for 36 continuous hours, without sleeping, eating "chapatti rolls" in between.

"In Malayalam, there is a saying, *theeyil kuruthathu veyilathu vaadilla,* which means if you are born in fire, the sunlight cannot burn you," he adds.

There is an oft-repeated view that multiplexes will bring in audiences for blockbusters, while independent cinema will find its groove in the OTT universe. The distinction is made as star-driven versus content-driven films, marking clearly that major stars don't make too many sensible films. "I don't see star power going down," adds Kongara. "Suriya's got films that are direct to OTT and headed to theatres too. The lines are not so blurred at the moment."

So even with multiplexes open—from late October in Maharashtra which joined the rest of the country which had started reopening from July—several projects will continue to do well online. Ramnath believes it's likely that screen fatigue will drive audiences back to cinemas, particularly when a movie is mounted on a big scale with prominent actors.

"What is most likely to happen is that the gap between a theatrical release and its subsequent release on a streaming platform will shrink from eight weeks to two. The streamer is likely to be the place where mid-budget movies and films with potentially risky themes will wash up," she adds. "Such projects previously had to jostle with crowd-pleasing titles for screen space."

Films like *Cinema Bandi* and actors like Rinku Rajguru are proof that "true-blue indies" can compete with all others because audiences do not discriminate. "We don't know when we will be back to normal," says Pandian, whose company has about a thousand people working on every project. "But the industry has to go on."

He believes that there is now a strong, consistent demand for content-oriented films. "People think [such films] could only get awards," he adds. "That's a myth. We take audiences for granted but who are we to judge them?" GQ

SILENT TAKE-OVER

From Tesla's much-awaited Indian debut to Mercedes-Benz's all-electric S-Class, the Indian car market, in 2022, appears high on tech and low on emissions.

After a couple of years marked by economic tumult, a resurgent Indian automotive industry is ready to witness what looks like its greenest year yet. With the electric revolution officially having kicked off, a record number of EV launches await us, with a few choice stars of internal combustion thrown in for good measure.

MERCEDES-BENZ EQS

It's not easy to supplant a car that's often considered to be the greatest in the world. And yet, you're looking at the car that will eventually go on to replace the mighty Mercedes-Benz S-Class. The EQS, which has already made its international debut, is dripping with Asimovian tech. The first all-electric luxury sedan from Mercedes-Benz, gets an advanced driver-assistance system, which uses a combination of ultrasound, radar, and camera sensors to offer a semi-autonomous driving experience. Inside, everything can be configured via a 56-inch 'Hyperscreen', which, once again, appears to have been borrowed from the future. Thanks to its ultra-slippery surface, the EQS is good for long-range driving, with the middle-order 580 4Matic version providing 650 km of range. The future is electric, and the new EQS is poised to be at the vanguard of EV luxury.

Price: ₹ 1.75 crore (estimated)

AUDI A3

The year may be big on electrics, but petrol-powered cars continue to be the norm and the new A3 is yet another example of why they remain so popular. Easily one of the best-looking cars presently in Audi's stable, the new A3 is a lithe, muscular little powerhouse, likely to feature a 1.5-litre TFSI, turbo-petrol making up to 150 bhp of power and mated to a seven-speed DSG gearbox. While the figure doesn't make it to the top of any power rankings, the A3's lightweight underpinnings and taut chassis will make for a surprisingly potent package.

Price: ₹ 35–40 lakh (estimated)

TESLA MODEL 3

With camouflaged versions of the Tesla Model 3 having been spotted doing test runs, the Model 3's impending arrival is all but guaranteed. The most popular car that Tesla presently makes, the Model 3, will come in as a completely built unit. While the single-motor RWD version promises to be the most affordable one, the dual-motor 'Performance' version provides supercar acceleration, making it one of the fastest EVs in the country, south of the Audi e-tron GT. But the Model 3 is so much more than just outright speed. The RWD version's 50-kWh battery has a claimed range of 437 km. In the AWD configuration, the range, thanks to a larger battery, goes all the way up to 576 km. It's no wonder the Model 3 is the world's largest-selling battery electric.

Price: ₹ 60–80 lakh (estimated)

TESLA MODEL Y

The Model Y is almost identical to the Model 3, except it is taller, seats seven, and features a dual-motor AWD setup as standard. This makes it a potent crossover, the likes of which never go out of vogue in India. There's no word on whether Tesla's famous 'Autopilot' system will be fitted on either of the models, given that it uses a set of eight cameras to monitor the road, which, in the Indian context, can prove overwhelming on the best of days. That said, the Model Y's added utility and gull-wing doors should find plenty of takers.

Price: ₹ 77 lakh (estimated)

WORDS: PARTH CHARAN. PHOTOS COURTESY OF MERCEDES-BENZ; AUDI AG; SHUTTERSTOCK (TESLA).

VOLKSWAGEN VIRTUS

The Volkswagen Virtus, much like its sibling, the Skoda Slavia, aims to breathe new life into the ailing mid-size sedan segment that's been almost completely trampled by compact SUVs. Bearing the distinction of being VW's most extensively localized sedan, much like the Taigun, the MQB A0 platform–based Virtus is part of yet another key offensive in the brand's second and most-significant innings in the country. With the Skoda Auto Volkswagen group having discontinued diesels, the Virtus will get two turbo-petrol options, along with a host of attributes that will likely warm the cockles of any petrolhead's heart.

Price: ₹ 11–17 lakh (estimated)

VOLVO XC40 Recharge

The Volvo XC40 Recharge's delayed arrival has done little to dampen its appeal. As Volvo's first EV in the country, it benefits not only from being a zero-emission vehicle but also one of the safest cars on the road—safety being the hallmark of the Swedish car brand. The XC40 Recharge shares its underpinnings with its petrol-powered counterpart, and makes a whopping 402 bhp through its 78-kWh battery pack. Being a compact SUV, the Recharge is particularly well-suited to long-distance journeys, now that the hood, which formerly accommodated an engine, provides additional storage space. All roads or no roads, this EV is primed for adventure.

Price: ₹ 50 lakh (estimated)

LEXUS NX

After having been a niche player since its debut in the country, Lexus needs another win (like the ES) and is betting big on the upcoming NX crossover SUV. The 2022 model gets completely revamped interiors, which include a bigger, centrally mounted touchscreen and wireless charging. It gets a 2.5-litre naturally aspirated petrol engine, whose power is supplemented by an electric motor that can run independently for 58 km. As the most contemporary of cars in their import-only line-up, which comprises almost exclusively hybrids, the NX 450h is the right mix of compact, cutting-edge, and economical. GQ

Price: ₹ 60 lakh (estimated)

WORDS: PARTH CHARAN. PHOTOS COURTESY OF VOLKSWAGEN AG; VOLVO INDIA; LEXUS.

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RETURN OF THE JEDI

Audi's moneymaker is back with a new face and some nifty new tech. Is it a more wholesome SUV than before?

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TORQUE
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PRICE
STARTS AT ₹58.93 LAKH (EX-SHOWROOM)

+ &FYI

The new Q5 gets redesigned LED headlamps, a 550-litre boot, and Audi's latest-generation MMI software.

It's not hard to see why 45% of Audi India's sales come from its 'Q' range of SUVs. They've successfully managed to perform a tight-rope act of being inoffensively styled, unfailingly spacious, and practical. They're comfortable yet dynamic, sophisticated yet robust.

The Q5 does this better than most. It sits squarely in the middle of the Q range, flanked by the bigger Q7 and Q8 on one side and the smaller Q3 and Q2 on the other. Like all middle children, the Q5 has to work extra hard to be noticed. It's got to have the playful attributes of the Q2, while offering the utility and road presence of its bigger siblings. Thus far, its looks have always radiated sobriety, while its confines have always been more sedate than seductive. The Q5, then, has always been the Boy Scout of the mid-size luxury SUVs. And with its generally placid exterior, it has managed to adhere to the sort of starched-shirt conformity that makes it particularly well-suited to the Indian landscape. It has also served as Audi's bestseller globally, ever since its launch in 2008. Which explains the brand's reluctance to tinker with what's clearly a winning formula, because the new one is the beneficiary of an incremental rather than a revolutionary change.

The new Q5's looks are a lot more chiselled, with a reworked, octagonal chrome grille and a more angular front bumper. The shoulder line, even though it's more sharply creased now, curves as it reaches the fenders, adding a touch of softness to the otherwise aggressive design language. The new headlamps look sleeker and, dare I say, a tad menacing, adding flair to the Q5's formerly vanilla looks. That, along with new 19-inch alloys, sums up the changes made to its exterior. Inside lies a contemporized Audi cabin, with tan-leather upholstery, a 10.1-inch touchscreen display, a 19-speaker Bang & Olufsen sound system, and a bunch of other luxury staples, which include wireless charging, Audi's patented 'Drive Select' function, and eight airbags. All telltale signs of top-shelf luxury.

With Audi's diesel powertrain now a thing of the past, the brand has introduced the new Q5 exclusively in the 45 TFSI avatar. It gets a BSVI-compliant 2.0-litre turbo-petrol making 245 bhp and 370 Nm of torque, mated to Audi's seven-speed S Tronic dual-clutch transmission. There's a level of smoothness and refinement palpable from the very beginning. The Q5's acceleration doesn't pin you to your seat, it performs a faux levitation act, disconnecting you from the horrors of the tarmac while steadily building speed. Audi has also managed to make the steering feel more connected and well weighted, so driving this thing is a shade more gratifying than it was in the past. The engine also has a 12-volt, mild-hybrid system, which helps improve its economy by taking care of the humdrum start-stop functions.

Truth be told, Teutonic internal combustion vehicles have reached a level of tech saturation that has made them increasingly difficult to fault. The petrol powertrain, particularly the TFSI unit, delivers power in such a creamy smooth manner that you're likely to pop a blood vessel trying to identify its shortcomings. The dual-clutch system is so intuitive and eager to please, it refuses to break a sweat even under hard acceleration. Audi's proprietary Quattro AWD system, which is a standard fitment here, is as humourless and flawless as always, with no assault from G-forces breaking its grip. The Q5 is entirely devoid of foibles. Yet, it's evident that Audi has heeded the words of a minuscule pool of enthusiasts (who do not affect the brand's bottom line in any way) and made the Q5 more engaging to drive. The new model improves on an already superior product, proving that in a world where everything seems to be going wrong, some things are still consistently good. GQ

WORDS: PARTH CHARAN. PHOTOS COURTESY OF AUDI AG; SHUTTERSTOCK.

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GQ MEN OF THE YEAR AWARDS

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YEAR OF THE BRAVE

The year 2021 will always be remembered as one in which India faced a brutal second wave, with a raging pandemiccausing a summer of immense loss. Yet this has also been a year of great awakening, with critical issues like mental health, climate change, individual well-being, and the toxic aspects of social media taking root in the collective consciousness. This is a good thing. It has also been a year of profound individual accomplishment, with classic virtues like patience, tenacity, and enterprise being richly rewarded. Therefore "Year of the Brave" is a fitting theme for Men of the Year 2021. Our winners have been shortlisted not only for their excellence, but also for their courage in going further, challenging convention, and leading by example. They come from a wide range of backgrounds, regions, industries, and professions. Yet, all of them have one thing in common: They have uplifted and inspired a billion hearts and minds, at a time we needed it the most. —CHE KURRIEN

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

RADO SWITZERLAND

SHANTNU & NIKHIL

UNCLE TONY

BLAZER, TURTLENECK, AND TROUSERS BY **TOM FORD.** LOAFERS BY **CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN.**

GAME CHANGER

AYUSHMANN KHURRANA

Behind the stratospheric rise of Ayushmann Khurrana lies an individual dialled into the nuances of a changing society, someone willing to challenge the status quo and upend convention. As an actor, he imbues his characters with shades of grey, and unabashedly bares his soul. In the decade since his breakthrough role, Khurrana has navigated the textured universe of Indian storytelling with the precision of a creative who instinctively understands the transformative nature of his medium, and its power to bring about social change.

INTERVIEW: ARMAN KHAN.

YEAR OF THE BRAVE

"I HAVE ALWAYS GONE WITH MY GUT INSTINCTS, AND STRIVED TO BE DIFFERENT. FOR THIS, I HAVE GONE OUT OF MY WAY TO SEEK STORIES THAT ARE DISRUPTIVE AND NOVEL."

What's the most important creative lesson you've learnt?
I understood quite early on that a great story can come from anywhere. Over half of my films have been with first-time directors. Script selection is key. Those three years following *Vicky Donor* really helped me grow as an actor and a man. The road to growth only starts where self-obsession ends.

What inspires you?
I keep life simple. I know my country well, that helps. My knowledge comes from my background in street theatre, watching movies as a child [after] buying tickets in black, interacting with listeners during my radio days and getting into their minds to see what they truly wanted from their lives. The only way to get the pulse of the masses is to be one of them.

How important has family been in your journey?
Family holds you together and centres you. My parents and wife have encouraged me to always give my best. As a child, I was low on confidence but my father motivated me to go all out, pushed me to participate in competitions and dance my heart out. He believed in me when I didn't. Now, though, it's a symbiotic relationship with my parents. They come from a conservative background. These days, my brother and I make my father a better person. So, it's a give and take equation.

What does winning the Game Changer award mean to you?
I've always gone with my gut, and strived to be different. I've gone out of my way to seek stories that are disruptive and novel, with no expectation of achieving great monetary success. And I credit the audiences for being so receptive to my choices. So, yeah, "Game Changer" sounds right!

VEST, SHIRT, TROUSERS, AND SNEAKERS BY **LOUIS VUITTON.**

"IF MY MEDALS CAN INSPIRE EVEN ONE PERSON TO TAKE UP SPORTS, MY JOB WILL BE DONE."

GQ MEN OF THE YEAR AWARDS

YOUNG INDIAN OF THE YEAR

AVANI LEKHARA

On 30 August 2021, she became the youngest Indian and the country's first woman to win a Paralympic gold. The Jaipur native not only topped the 10-metre air rifle event in Tokyo, she also bagged bronze in the 50-metre rifle event, contributing to India's overall medal tally of 19, our highest yet at the Paralympics. The fact that she has achieved everything she has while being bound to a wheelchair is one of the most inspirational stories of our time. What's more: at 19, she's just getting started.

MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR

PRABH DEEP

At the leading edge of India's rap revolution, his tracks transcend class, region, and genre. Raised in a tough neighbourhood in West Delhi, Prabh Deep is committed to the idea of music as a vehicle for social change. His second album, *Tabia*, released earlier this year, is a bonafide masterpiece, with recognition of his artistry growing across the world.

COAT BY
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TROUSERS BY
ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA.
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HIS NEW ALBUM, RELEASEDTHISYEAR, ONLY PROVES THE SHEER ARTISTRY OF HIS MUSIC AND ITS IMPACT ON HEARTS AND MINDS ALIKE.

UNCLE TONY PRESENTS

ACTOR OF THE YEAR

MANOJ BAJPAYEE

Whether he's portraying the stark reality of an Indian politician or a conflicted warlord, this talented actor continues to invigorate and enhance any project he is part of. This year, in the second instalment of the hit series *Family Man*, he used his trademark wit and eye for nuance to bring to life the conflict of a regular man caught between his allegiance to the nation and his family.

"TO INNOVATE, I HAVE ALWAYS FOUND THE ANSWER IN NEW FILM-MAKERS. I PHYSICALLY CHASE THEM. THEY KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH ME AND HOW TO MAKE ME LOOK GOOD. THEY DID, AND HERE I AM."

WORDS: ARMAN KHAN.

BUNDI AND SHIRT BY **S&N BY SHANTANU & NIKHIL.** WATCH BY **RADO.**

"CLOTHING HAS ALREADY BEGUN TO, AND WILL CONTINUE TO TRANSCEND GENDERS."

KIMONO BY **AMIT AGGARWAL.**

DESIGNER OF THE YEAR

AMIT AGGARWAL

He's one of India's most progressive, visionary designers—from experimenting with traditional textiles and presenting them in sculpted, extraordinary forms, to working with recycled materials like discarded PVC, and putting craft at the centre of his enterprise. It's been a decade since this designer burst onto the scene with a dream debut. Today, he's poised to take his vision to the world.

What parts of the pre-pandemic era will you retain, and what elements of the past have you stripped away?
I've meticulously assessed which products are essential to the brand, and those that are not. Anything that doesn't add to either art or commerce goes. I want to make fewer products, ones that are more thoughtful. There's been a gargantuan change in design through the pandemic. Gender fluidity is a huge theme, and it needs to be looked at beyond the basic idea; we need to get down to brass tacks of the design and cut of garments.

Using recycled material is at the heart of your label.
As a child, I often visited my father's factory, and was fascinated by metal parts and metal shavings. It's there my affinity for material was born. I've always liked to look at elements in a new light, give things new form. We've been using recycled rubber and polymers for years; in some pieces, we have used polythene bags, drinking straws, or old Banarasi saris no one is wearing anymore. In the future, I want to work with recycled suede, and the waste from our own processes. Using mundane, everyday things to create something beautiful is my goal.

What does the future of menswear look like?
The concepts of menswear and womenswear will disappear. Clothing has already begun to, and will continue to transcend genders. Eventually, gender-specific clothing will become obsolete.

What encourages you the most about the future?
People—not just the resilience of the human race, but the desire to evolve, grow and expand. I'd like to expand the Amit Aggarwal universe to art, furniture, and accessories. That's what the future holds for me.

INTERVIEW: SAUMYAA VOHRA.

CHIVAS PRESENTS

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

TAAPSEE PANNU

A powerhouse performer, she is resetting what it means to be a celebrity today. From her vocal advocacy for equal pay, child rights, and other causes, to her thoughtful choices of roles that question societal norms, this actor is at the vanguard of the change being felt across the film and entertainment industry.

SETTING NEW BOUNDARIES WITH HER THOUGHTFUL CHARACTERS, PANNU HAS REDEFINED ACTING AS A DRIVER OF CHANGE.

DRESS
BY **DIOR.**
EARRINGS BY
OUTHOUSE.

CHIVAS PRESENTS

DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR

CHAITANYA TAMHANE

With his singular vision and dedication to telling unvarnished human stories, this 34-year-old director is one of this country's most powerful creative forces. His films speak to the textured nuances of our times while subtly challenging the sanitized limits of Indian cinema. His masterful second film, *The Disciple,* released earlier this year, reveals a storyteller in complete command of his craft—winning him legions of fans across the globe.

The Disciple is rooted in the milieu of Hindustani classical music and played out in the working-class heart of Mumbai. The roles were played by local Maharashtrians with no acting experience. Given its hyperlocal nature, did you expect the global support that it received?

On a basic level, *The Disciple* could be the story of anyone embarking on a life pursuit seriously—an entrepreneur, ballerina, politician, or basketball player. The idea was to capture the fact that we all start out with a certain ambition but then life happens and one has to make a series of compromises. For most people, this is a universal experience. No one starts out with the intention of leading a mediocre life. *The Disciple* is the story of one of these people.

Describe your mentor-mentee relationship with Alfonso Cuarón.

The fact that he chose me under the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative is still something I find unbelievable. During our interactions, I have to be conscious of the fact that even if he's being generous with me, he's still a master of his craft. A person can be very accessible but that doesn't mean his artistry is. I'm fortunate enough to call him my friend and a father figure. It was surreal to be with him in the *Roma* unit as part of the mentorship programme. I was right there experiencing everything from the sound engineering to the colour-grading process; it was an immersive

INTERVIEW: ARMAN KHAN.

"IT IS REFRESHING TO SEE OLD-SCHOOL NOTIONS OF FILM-MAKING COLLAPSE."

BOTTLE
BY **CHIVAS**

film-school experience that no amount of money could buy.

What's been your bravest moment this year?
Putting out a film at the peak of the pandemic—I was losing people in my family. Yet, I also had to promote the film and see this baby, which I'd worked on for five years, be born into the world. It was taxing on me.

What is the future of film in India?
It's refreshing to see old-school notions of film-making collapse. There are no longer a select few custodians of cinema with access to film-making. My fear, though, is that we might be compromising on depth in the quest for breadth. There's an imperative to churn out content with minimal focus on quality. The director, in a way, has become dispensable because the scale of the project seems to be paramount. I hope this changes.

GQ MEN OF THE YEAR AWARDS

SPORTING LEGEND

NEERAJ CHOPRA

On a sweltering August evening in Tokyo, Neeraj Chopra stepped out on the field and threw a javelin further than the greatest and the best in the world could that day. With that, against all odds, Chopra became only the second Indian to win an individual Olympic gold. An inspiration for the ages, the 23-year-old has now captured the nation's imagination like no other athlete before him.

Neeraj Chopra's historic 87.58m throw in the finals of the javelin competition at the Tokyo Games was a giant leap forward for Indian sport. Though it may be years before the ripple effects of Chopra's gold are fully realized, Chopra has become a national phenomenon, a young super-achiever who is somehow relatable despite his extraordinary achievement.

Since his triumphant return, Chopra has rubbed shoulders with the most powerful people in the country, smoothly fielded awkward questions with preternatural maturity, and struck a chord with a large majority of the country's youth. He loves the attention, but doesn't take himself too seriously.

Neeraj Chopra doesn't come from a place of privilege. Like thousands of other aspiring athletes, Chopra started from the bottom and worked hard—trudging to a sports centre early each morning, eating what was served to him, then hurling his javelin like a beast till his coach told him to stop. An Instagram post of him taking his parents on their maiden flight made him instantly relatable to the vast majority of Indians, who haven't yet boarded an aircraft.

As a super-elite athlete, his world has now changed. Some of the world's leading brands are lining up to sign him on. His social media handles are a monument to celebrating himself—packed with selfies, #plandids, gym posts, and travel shots.

Javelin is a lonely sport. When you're not competing in tournaments, all you're doing is hitting the track each morning and practising throws on your own. Yet, after a career-threatening injury, a pandemic, and almost zero international exposure for nearly two years, Chopra did the bravest thing a 23-year-old could do: He won his country a historic gold.

WORDS: ABHISHEK MANDE BHOT.

CHOPRA HAS STRUCK A CHORD WITH A LARGE MAJORITY OF THE COUNTRY'S YOUTH. HE LOVES THE ATTENTION, BUT DOES NOT TAKE HIMSELF TOO SERIOUSLY.

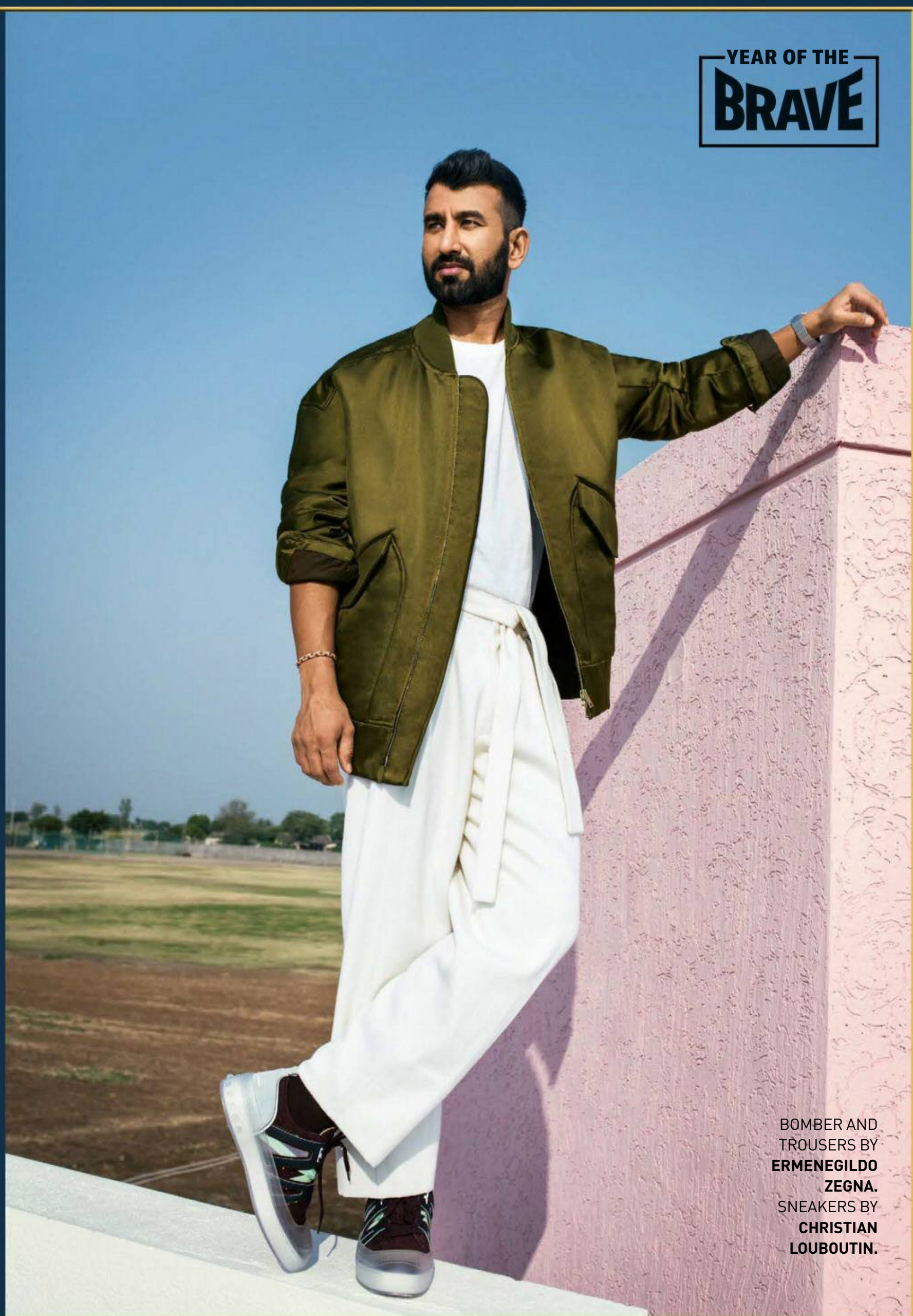
SHERWANI BY **KUNAL RAWAL.** TROUSERS BY **S&N BY SHANTANU & NIKHIL.** SHOES BY **CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN.** WATCH BY **CARTIER.**

INSPIRATION

CHETESHWAR PUJARA

For over a decade, he's been the bulwark of India's Test batting unit as the number three, Mr. Dependable—the warrior who blunted the opposition with his iron will, classic technique, and willingness to take body blows. Yet for all his past accomplishments, this year stands apart, with two crucial knocks in Sydney and Brisbane, ensuring India won an unforgettable, historic Test series in Australia. He may not be flamboyant, but with his stoicism, tenacity, and courage, he has inspired millions across the globe.

HE MAY NOT BE FLAMBOYANT, BUT WITH HIS STOICISM, TENACITY, AND COURAGE, HE HAS INSPIRED MILLIONS ACROSS THE GLOBE.



BOMBER AND TROUSERS BY **ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA.** SNEAKERS BY **CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN.**

YEAR OF THE BRAVE

SUIT AND
JUMPER BY
PAUL SMITH.
BOTTLE BY
CHIVAS.

ACTING EXCELLENCE

VIKRANT MASSEY

Breaking away from tropes and conventions, his characters are located within a refreshing, modern milieu—the roles often imbued with equal parts of hope and frailty. He is prolific and versatile, displaying a depth and range that are all too rare.

INTERVIEW: ARMAN KHAN.

"I'VE ALWAYS EVALUATED MY VULNERABILITIES, STRENGTHENED MY SKILLS, AND COME BACK STRONGER."

You are one of the most talented actors working today. What motivates you?
I've been part of the entertainment industry for nearly two decades. There are days when I'm anxious about being seen as outdated or redundant. Questions and doubts go through my mind. The upside is that these feelings motivate me to get up each day, evaluate my vulnerabilities, strengthen my skills, come back stronger, and reinvent myself. I hope this process of continuous growth always comes through in my work.

How do you view the post-pandemic film landscape?
For most of us in India, cinema has always been a liberating experience—an escape from the mundane and the monotonous, and an opportunity to have a good laugh. Yet, we now realize films don't just entertain but also document the times we live in. With the many streaming options available now, storytelling has exploded. Life has become complicated too: the hashtag culture, social media posts, or whether you have a blue tick—one can't just simply be an actor anymore. Personally, I've evaluated things and realized that what most matters to me and my audience is what I do in front of the camera.

What does winning *GQ*'s Acting Excellence award mean to you?
My journey started as a little boy in Versova with dreams of being an actor. So this is an incredible moment, and motivates me to keep pushing myself creatively.

TUXEDO, SHIRT, AND BOW TIE BY **ALIPH BY GATSBY.**

BREAKTHROUGH TALENT

RADHIKA MADAN

The ascent of streaming platforms has helped level the playing field in Bollywood. Standing tall amid all the brilliant, new talent is this young actor. This year she sparkled as "Didi", a mysterious spiritual leader in 'Spotlight', one of the four short stories that made up the *Ray* anthology. Given her unpredictable and adventurous selection of roles, the future looks bright for this actor, who can surprise, delight, and deliver with quiet ferocity.

How do you navigate an industry as competitive as this?
When you come from the outside with no idea how your career is going to pan out, you're fearless. Even if you're part of a bad film, nobody cares as it's not hyped and scrutinized enough. This allows you to take more risks.

What do you most enjoy about being an actor?
The fact that I get to live different lives in one lifetime. I look for parts that are very different from the narrative of my own life. For instance, Didi in 'Spotlight' (*Ray*) has the kind of life experience I will never have. I took on the role because I wanted to feel the kind of power that's not possessed even by the biggest star in the country.

What impact has the pandemic had on you?
It allowed me to pause and take stock, to recalibrate what I wanted from my life. The answer was simple: I don't want awards and films and red-carpet appearances, I just want to see my parents do okay. I now consciously take time off to ensure I spend enough time with them. It's a major and deliberate shift.

What are some of the lessons you learnt from television?
In television, you become an overnight sensation. You get mobbed at the airport and the hours never seem to end. You don't know why people love you so much. But someone once told me that when your show is over, the crowds will disappear and nobody will care. I was 18 at the time, and that advice has informed my relationship with fame. I'm aware that it is temporary, so I consciously try to avoid getting attached to it. Fame is fickle but art is not.

INTERVIEW: ANKUR PATHAK.

"FAME IS FICKLE BUT ART IS NOT."

JACKET, T-SHIRT, AND SKIRT BY **LINETRIBE_.**

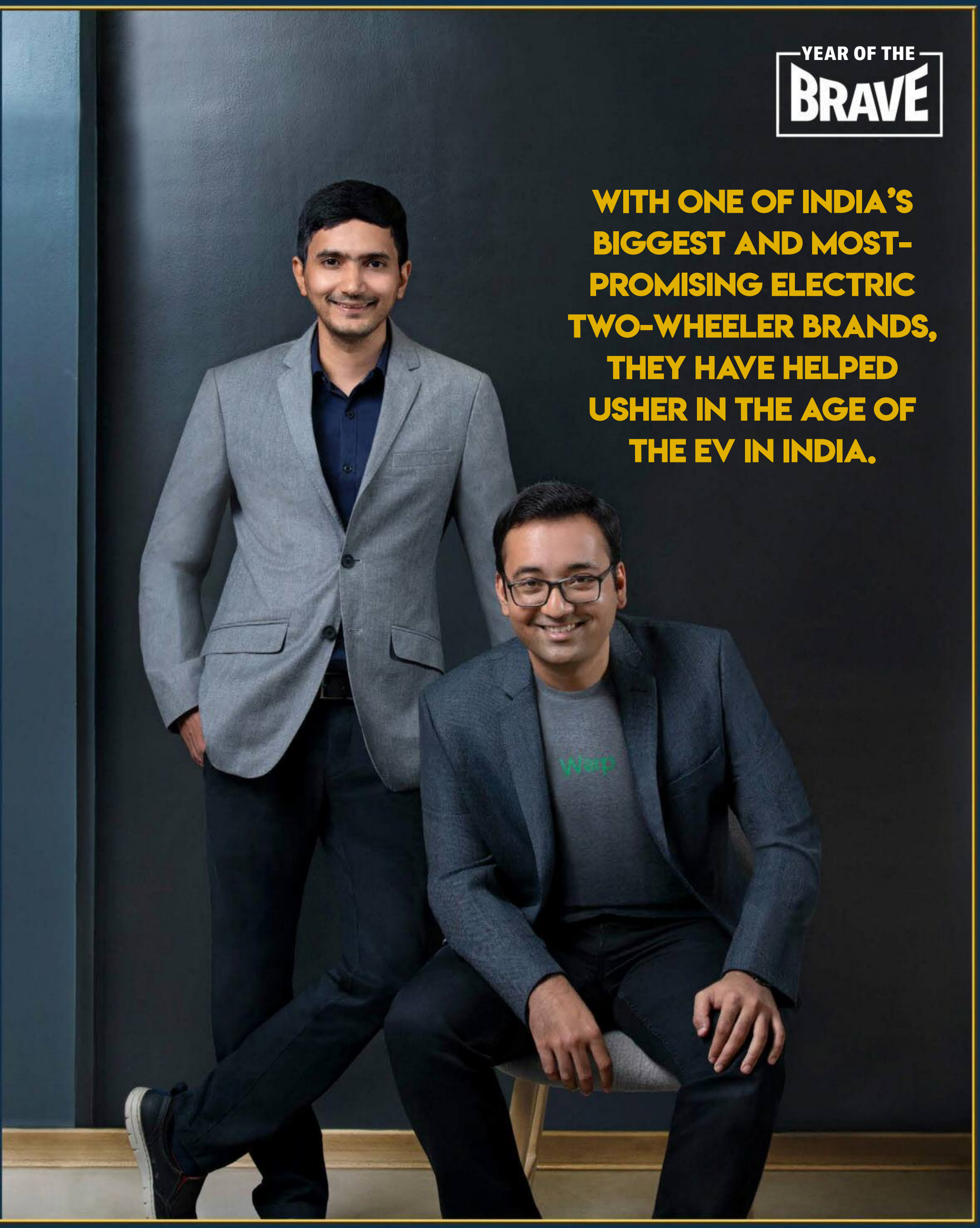
ECO-ENTREPRENEURS

TARUN MEHTA & SWAPNIL JAIN

Nearly a decade ago, Tarun Mehta and Swapnil Jain were two greenhorns, fresh out of IIT Madras, tinkering with a start-up that had the potential to alter the two-wheeler landscape. Today, the two co-founders of Ather Energy are custodians of one of India's biggest and most-promising electric two-wheeler brands. One that has helped usher in the age of the EV in India.

Between Mehta, who serves as the brand's CEO, and Jain, its chief technical officer, Ather has evolved to become synonymous with timely deliveries, immaculate build quality, and world-class engineering. It has also expanded to 20 cities across India, with 220 charging stations, at a time when most competitors are still drawing their bowstrings. It's not just the Ather 450X—the brand's best-selling scooter—that's a zero-emission product. The Hosur-based manufacturing plant, where its scooters are built, generates zero effluent waste with e-waste going directly to authorized recycling agents. Mehta's vision for an aspirational, built-from-scratch EV backed by Jain's stellar engineering chops have directly contributed to Ather's rapid year-on-year growth, making it the largest e-scooter maker in the country by revenue—proving that years of incremental growth can go a lot further than just disruptive change.

WORDS: PARTH CHARAN.


YEAR OF THE
BRAVE
WITH ONE OF INDIA'S BIGGEST AND MOST-PROMISING ELECTRIC TWO-WHEELER BRANDS, THEY HAVE HELPED USHER IN THE AGE OF THE EV IN INDIA.
Warp

RADO PRESENTS

LEADING MAN

VICKY KAUSHAL

Headlining a film is difficult, and few actors do it with more creativity, presence, and commitment. From inhabiting vivid, disparate worlds to embracing characters laden with visceral nuance, his performances always sear. A stickler for perfection, he is that rare combination: an actor and a star.

INTERVIEW: ARMAN KHAN.

YEAR OF THE BRAVE

SUIT AND
SHIRT BY
DIOR MEN.

"TO HAVE THAT FEELING OF NERVOUSNESS ON THE SET IS IMPORTANT. I WANT TO KEEP PUSHING MYSELF, TO KNOW I'M CONQUERING MY FEARS AND MOVING FORWARD."

We're living in a time of flux. What's the most exciting change you're seeing?
In *Sardar Udham,* Shoojit Sircar was committed to making a film with no songs, just a background score. These are the little things that go a long way in changing film grammar. Audiences have told us in more ways than one that they're looking for fresh content, that they're interested in new voices, and in embracing newer forms.

How do you approach film roles that have historical and social contexts such as *Sardar Udham* and *Uri*?
Without overthinking things—I'm aware that the historical and social contexts of these subjects is way larger than me as an actor, and that the pressure to give my best is at its peak. I acknowledge these thoughts, then park them in a corner of my mind. If I keep indulging my thoughts, I won't be able to utter a single word.

You've established a reputation for versatility.
Every actor wants to hear this—that none of your films are similar. Taking risks makes me feel alive and stimulated. I don't want to be comfortable. If I arrive on a set knowing I can stroll through a role, then I'm doing a disservice to my craft. I want to creatively engage with my directors, writers, and co-actors. To have that feeling of nervousness on set is important. I want to keep pushing myself, to know I'm conquering my fears and moving forward.

TURTLENECK BY **Z ZEGNA.** TROUSERS BY **ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA.** WATCH BY **RADO.**

SHIRT AND TURTLENECK BY **PRADA.** BERET BY **LAULHÈRE AT JJ HAT CENTER.**

SUPERHERO OF THE YEAR

TOM HOLLAND

Tom Holland was 19 when he first appeared as Spider-Man and became his generation's biggest leading man. Now he holds the keys to the Marvel Cinematic Universe—that is, if he still wants them.

BY **OLIVER FRANKLIN-WALLIS**

This is going to sound like complete bullshit, but I swear to you that this is true," Tom Holland says. "Have you ever heard of cognitive dreaming?"

We've been talking for a couple of hours at this point, and conversation—as it tends to, after long enough—has drifted onto the subject of dreams. I've been having nightmares lately, I tell him. Anxiety. This is something Tom Holland knows all about. He is a terrible sleeper; a sleepwalker; a sleep undresser, even. ("Four out of ten sleeps I wake up completely naked.") As it happens, he has a trick for dealing with nightmares, and because Tom Holland is Tom Holland—the actor who put the friendly back into your friendly neighbourhood Spider-Man and is just famously, energetically, irresistibly *nice*—of course he's happy to help.

"Okay, so I'll tell you how you do it. Essentially, when you're asleep, your brain is working way faster than it is when it's awake. Jon Watts [Holland's director on three *Spider-Man* movies] told me this, and it has worked. If you're in a dream and you read something, say, a stop sign, and you turn around, when you look back at the stop sign it will have changed. So what you do is—and this is where it sounds stupid—you set an alarm for every hour of the day when you're awake. When the alarm goes off, you read something. So I'm reading—"

At this point Holland looks around his bedroom, which is sparse, an unmade bed and a half-open wardrobe behind him, low fall sun streaming in

JUMPER BY **SALVATORE FERRAGAMO.** TROUSERS BY **GUCCI.** BOOTS BY **GEORGE CLEVERLEY.** WATCH BY **TAG HEUER.** RING BY **BULGARI.**

the window, and alights upon a packet of pistachios. "—*Roasted and salted.* You turn away, you look back at it: *Roasted and salted. Okay, I'm not dreaming.* What happens is when you do it for a long time, you start to do that in your sleep. Sometimes, if I'm having a really bad dream, I'll look at a sign and go, 'Oh, I'm dreaming.' And then you have free rein to do whatever you want."

So you can influence your dreams?

"Yeah. The last time it happened to me, I was flying around the Golden Gate Bridge. It was *awesome.*"

Holland is at home in London, waiting out a government-mandated travel quarantine, so for now we're talking over Zoom. It's an unusual time for the actor, a rare pause. Since he landed the part six years ago, Holland has played Spider-Man in five movies, of which four have made more than a billion dollars each. In the past year or so he has starred in three films, taking on the offbeat dramatic roles of a priest-murdering orphan in *The Devil All the Time* and a heroin-addicted bank robber in *Cherry,* and finished shooting two more. Still somehow only 25, Holland has ascended to a tier of stardom few actors ever reach, and rarely so young. "There are very few actors working now who are versatile in the way that he is," says *Spider-Man* producer and former Sony chairperson Amy Pascal. "And he's the hardest-working person that I know."

"Since I got cast as Spider-Man, I haven't really taken a break," Holland says. So he's enjoying some state-enforced time to himself. "I find myself ringing my dad [Dominic, a comedian and author] for stuff that I should definitely know how to do," he says. "'Dad, how do I put the washing machine on?'" Last night a skylight broke in bad weather, flooding his kitchen. The outside world has a way of forcing itself back in.

The next few months promise to be hectic even by Holland's standards. In December he'll star in *Spider-Man: No Way Home,* a film that Holland himself has called "the most ambitious stand-alone superhero movie ever made". Then there is February's *Uncharted,* a slick, Indiana Jones–y adaptation of the best-selling PlayStation franchise. "This is that moment of, like, 'Can Tom Holland stand up on his own and be a leading man?' I know that makes me sound like a *dick* for saying that," says Holland. "But for me it is, 'Can I do it without the Lycra?'"

The stakes for *No Way Home* are even higher. For several movies, Marvel has been establishing Holland as the new centre of Marvel's world. "Tom is stepping into the role that Robert Downey [Jr.] once occupied for Marvel, which is the favourite character, and in a lot of ways the soul of the Marvel universe," says Joe Russo, who, alongside his brother Anthony, has directed Holland in four movies, including *Avengers: Endgame.* What's more, *No Way Home* will finally collide Marvel's increasingly byzantine cinematic universe with Sony's own equally convoluted Spider-Verse (currently comprising Tom Hardy's *Venom* movies, plus the forthcoming *Morbius* and *Kraven the Hunter*), thereby planting the seed from which years of sequels and limited series and sundry other subscription-generating content will surely bloom.

GQ MEN OF THE YEAR AWARDS
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"BEING SPIDER-MAN IS MORE OF A RESPONSIBILITY THAN JUST HAVING A JOB. THERE ARE KIDS OUT THERE WHO ARE BULLIED AT SCHOOL WHO DON'T FIT IN, AND SPIDER-MAN IS THEIR GO-TO GUY."

Holland, however, is not signed up for any of that. *No Way Home* is, at the time of writing, the last film on his *Spider-Man* contract. As we're talking, in early October, he says there are still a few shots to pick up, some additional dialogue to record, the small matter of a global press tour, and then… nothing. "It's very strange," Holland says. "The last six years of my life, I always had a job to go to." After so long in the superhero business, Holland is

readjusting to life without a mask on. "It's kind of terrifying, but it's also really exciting," he says. You see, lately Holland has been thinking about dreams, and wondering if those he once had—the future he once saw for himself—are still his dreams after all.

To understand how Holland became a multiple-tentpole-movie-carrying action hero, it's simplest to start with ballet. Holland grew up in Kingston Upon Thames, an upmarket town just south of London. There, age nine, he was spotted at a dance class by a West End choreographer, who suggested he audition for the *Billy Elliot* musical. Holland practised ballet for two years to land the part, "just doing pliés and tendus and relevés. Développés—I hate développés so much." (That's the one where you extend your leg up and out until you look like this: Y.)

Finally, Holland was chosen to play Billy. His parents invited everyone they knew. Only, the day of his debut, Holland came down with tonsillitis. Not wanting to disappoint anyone, he didn't say anything. "I was like, 'I can't miss this, because all of these people are coming,'" Holland says. He delivered a flawless performance, and nobody even noticed he was sick until the following morning, when he was taken to the doctor and given the rest of the week off.

"I got the nickname Sick Note, which frustrates me to my core, even today," says Holland. "I was too young to do that show. I was incredibly underdeveloped as a kid, and I would get sick, or I would be tired, or I would get injured, and I'd need to take a break because you're doing three shows a week, rehearsing every single day. Now as an actor I push through everything, because I'm not going to be Sick Note."

When Holland started making it in Hollywood—a debut in 2012's *The Impossible,* followed by small parts in *Wolf Hall* and *In the Heart of the Sea*—he leaned in to his balletic talents, literally throwing himself into every job. (This approach is written in the subtle S-bend of his nose, which he has broken twice, once on the set of *The Lost City of Z,* and again on *Chaos Walking.*) "I'm like a Duracell battery. I'm the bunny," Holland says. It's that energy that comes through on-screen, whether he's doing backflips as Spider-Man, or pulling on fishnets and grinding to Rihanna on *Lip Sync Battle:* determination bordering on desperation. "Any time I've ever watched him work, he does it 150 percent," his *Spider-Man* co-star Zendaya says. "It's incredible to watch."

"One of my biggest faults is that I'm an impossible people pleaser," Holland says. "I don't like the idea of people not liking me. So I will do whatever I can do to make that not the case."

In 2015, Holland beat thousands of other young actors for the role of Spider-Man in a multi-film deal between Sony (which owns the rights) and Marvel. "He had a vulnerability and a wit, and an immense likability that felt to me like Peter Parker from the comics," Russo recalls. Unlike his predecessors, Andrew Garfield and Tobey Maguire, Holland's Parker was still a child, burdened with a responsibility that he finds overwhelming. Holland could relate. While most kids his age were still sitting exams and asking around for a prom date, he found himself in a full-time job, only his co-workers were Robert Downey Jr., Michael Keaton, and Jake Gyllenhaal. Nonetheless, he figured out a way to infuse his nerves into his performance. "I was given this piece of advice as a kid that was really helpful, which is: If you think about the actual physical feeling of being nervous, it's the same physical feeling as being excited," Holland says. "So I've just convinced myself all my life that when I'm nervous, I'm really excited."

It was from his older peers that Holland learned both his craft and how to navigate fame, which arrived not in a slow accumulation but in one disorienting rush. Suddenly he was studying for a master's degree in how to stay on the rails, from actors who in some cases had fallen off and found a way back. Holland latched on to every potential mentor, sucking everything in. "Some told me, 'You should go out and buy a Ferrari and live in Malibu and live the high life.' Some [would] say, 'I wouldn't do interviews with chat shows if you don't want to,'" he says. "I've kind of found a middle ground." (He bought an electric Porsche.) He said yes to everything—the press tours, the TV appearances, the YouTube stunts. By 21, he had his entire career arc planned out, in 2017 telling *Interview* magazine in response to questions posed by Zendaya, "The 20-year goal is to be a film director. The 15-year goal is to win an Oscar."

In the middle of all that, he was growing up, trying to be a normal person, or as close to normal as one can be inside the strange crucible of fame. "The ages between 15 and 21 are when you figure out who you're going to be," he says. "When everyone's telling you that you're

SHIRT BY **SAINT LAURENT BY ANTHONY VACCARELLO.** TROUSERS BY **AMIRI.** BELT BY **ANDERSON'S.** NECKLACE BY **BERNARD JAMES.** RING BY **BULGARI.**

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the best thing in the world, you can grow up and believe that." He found companionship in actors his own age, particularly his *Spider-Man* co-stars Jacob Batalon and Zendaya; Zendaya, in particular, became his guide to his new reality. "Having her in my life was so instrumental to my sanity," he says. "She is so good at being the role model for young guys and girls. When anyone comes up, like, 'Can I have a picture?', it's never a bad time. Whereas my initial reaction was: 'Why are you talking to me? Leave me alone.'"

Zendaya taught him that fame is work too. So he learned to smile for every picture, hug every fan, do the meet and greets at Disneyland. To always be on. An example: Just recently he was walking in London, when a group of guys started following him and taking pictures. "Something had happened in my life and it really put me in a bad mood," he says. "I was just trying to keep my head together, and I turned around and told them to get lost." A reasonable person might think this a fair response to being stalked by strangers. But after a few yards, Holland turned around and apologized. "I have to remind myself that being Spider-Man is more of a responsibility than just having a job," he says later. "There are kids out there who are bullied at school who don't fit in, and Spider-Man is their fucking go-to guy, you know? And at the moment I'm that guy."

The day after Holland emerges from quarantine, we meet for dinner at the Chiltern Firehouse, a luxury hotel in Marylebone, a neighbourhood in central London. Holland likes it here; it's discreet. There's a scene in *Uncharted* where Holland's character, Nathan Drake, works behind a bar, and so Holland would come in to do shifts with the staff, learning how to mix cocktails, practise trick pours, toss bottles around. We're shown to a table called the Snug, a space barely six feet square, with a sofa, a privacy curtain, and its own tiny open fire—in other words, the make-out table. Holland is unbothered. He squeezes into the space, wearing pinstripe pants and a shirt the colour of caramel, his hair falling on his forehead in kinks. It seems ridiculous, but after

BLAZER BY **SÉFR.** JUMPER BY **BOGLIOLI.** SHIRT BY **NEEDLES.** TROUSERS BY **FENDI.** BOOTS BY **GIANVITO ROSSI.**

seeing him play teenagers on-screen for so long, it's startling to see Holland as a *man.* There's a heft to him in person. His posture is incredible. His skin is luminous. His biceps are like suspension cables. On *Uncharted,* Holland worked with Mark Wahlberg, who is notably, in Holland's words, "an absolute unit." (British for absolutely humongous.) "I saw him walk onto set in his costume and I was like, 'Fuck, he is twice my size,'" says Holland. "After the [COVID] lockdown, we had five months off, and I just ate and trained and ate and trained. When I got back on set, the first thing he said to me was"—here he puts on his best Wahlberg—'*Wow, somebody has been training.*'"

As a young actor, Holland obsessed about his height—he's five feet eight, although his physicality is such that you don't really notice—going so far as to wear lifts in his shoes. "I'd do this thing on red carpets where I would stand closer to the photographers than the people behind me [to look taller]," he says. He has since learned to focus on what he can control. "I cannot do anything about my height," he says. "I *can* put on more muscle." For his debut as Spider-Man, in 2016's *Captain America: Civil War,* the costume department put him in a muscle suit. Over six movies the suit has gotten smaller and smaller: "Now I just have a penis cup," he says.

Holland may only be 25, but lately he's started to feel the toll of years spent flipping and swinging around on wires. "I was going to the gym in the morning like, 'Oh, my God, I've must have torn something in my leg,' and the guys were like, 'You haven't, you're just tired and you're getting older.'" His intense schedule meant he had only three days between finishing *Uncharted* in Berlin and starting work on *No Way Home* in Atlanta. "I never realized how lucky I am that Spider-Man wears a mask, because when he's bouncing around and flying from buildings, that's all CG. In *Uncharted* it's just me in a henley and cargo pants," he says. By the time shooting wrapped, he had developed tendinitis, and hurt all over. "That film absolutely *broke* me."

There are times when, because of Holland's exuberance—or perhaps his naiveté—he takes on more than he should. While filming the last two *Avengers,* he would spend three days on set in Atlanta, then get on a plane to London and do two days on the set of *The Current War,* only to fly back to Atlanta again. "I remember, for a large portion of the film, Benedict [Cumberbatch, his co-star in all three movies] had a double in *Avengers* while he was shooting in London," he says. "I didn't know that was a thing." While filming *Cherry,* he lost nearly a quarter of his body weight, adopting a crash diet and running 10 miles a day in a trash bag. "My energy levels were so low," Holland says. After years of being the Duracell bunny, Holland was burned out.

Looking back, Holland now realizes he was probably burned out for a long time. He recalls the press tour for *Spider-Man: Homecoming,* for which he travelled to 17 countries, doing junkets and pumping out backflips on request. By the last step of the tour, in China, "I was really ill," he says. "But I didn't say no. I was like, 'I can do it, I can do it, I can do it.'" *I'm not going to be Sick Note.* Then one day, in a press conference, his body said no for him. He walked off the stage and threw up everywhere. "I was under a lot of pressure to finish the day's work. That was the first time I was really like, 'No, I'm done now. I've given you everything.'"

Here is Tom Holland's nightmare. It started a few years ago, when he was just beginning to find fame, and now it happens pretty regularly, especially when he's working, which is to say all the time. You see, among Holland's night-time afflictions is sleep paralysis, a kind of disconnection between your brain and your musculoskeletal system that can happen in the moment of waking. "You're awake, but you can't move," Holland says.

In the nightmare, Holland wakes up with sleep paralysis. Only then he realizes that he's not alone, that his bedroom is filled with paparazzi. They're looming over him, bulbs popping, and Holland's just stuck there,

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frozen, panicking. "They're all there, and I'm looking for my publicist, like, Where is the person who's supposed to be protecting me? What's going on? And then when I am able to move again, I turn the lights on, and it's over," Holland says. "And I think, Oh, my God, I'm in my room, I'm fine. There's no one here. But then I will get up and look for a recording device or something that someone has put in my room."

Hence: cognitive dreaming.

But the funny thing about fame is that just as you start to find your dreams coming true, so, too, can nightmares. And so it was this summer, when pictures emerged in the tabloid press of Holland and Zendaya in a car in L.A., kissing. It's a small thing, a kiss. And ordinarily, two 20-somethings in a relationship embracing at a stoplight would remain what it is, a moment of intimacy between two people. Only in this case, that kiss was instantly beamed around the world, to be dissected in reaction videos, "relationship timelines," and *Entertainment Tonight.* (Page Six: "Zendaya, Tom Holland finally confirm they're dating with steamy car makeout." As if they had any choice.) Holland's private life had been in the press before, but this was different. Holland's and Zendaya's fans had long obsessed over whether the pair were together ("tom holland and zendaya flirting for 8 minutes straight": 1.5 million views). Some argued it must be a publicity stunt. "One of the downsides of our fame is that privacy isn't really in our control anymore, and a moment that you think is between two people that love each other very much is now a moment that is shared with the entire world," Holland says. He has said very little publicly about the relationship, and you sense it's something he's still navigating, trying to work out how much to give. "I've always been really adamant to keep my private life private, because I share so much of my life with the world anyway," he says. "We sort of felt robbed of our privacy."

You weren't ready to talk about it.

"I don't think it's about not being ready. It's just that we didn't want to."

Holland knows that he'll soon be on a global press tour, facing endless questions about it. "It's not a conversation that I can have without her," he says. "You know, I respect her too much to say… This isn't my story. It's our story. And we'll talk about what it is when we're ready to talk about it together."

"It was quite strange and weird and confusing and invasive," Zendaya tells me later, by phone. "The equal sentiment [we both share] is just that when you really love and care about somebody, some moments or things, you wish were your own.… I think loving someone is a sacred thing and a special thing and something that you want to deal with and go through and experience and enjoy amongst the two people that love each other."

There are little things Holland is still hung up on, like: How did the photographer get *in front* of them? Over the past few years, as his private bubble has gotten smaller, he's become more protective of it. There's a reason he doesn't go out, why he keeps the same staff from job to job, why he spends his free time on private golf courses (although he also just loves golf). Because here is something Tom Holland has learned: The more that you say yes to everything, the more of you they will take, and take, until there is nothing left just for you. "People mistake my kindness as weakness," he says. "Sometimes I see people trying to take advantage of me because I'm a nice person. Let me tell you, when you're a 19-year-old kid, they really do take advantage of you. You don't know any better. Now I look back and go, 'Wow, I wish someone had told me that I could say no.'"

Halfway through the making of *No Way Home,* Holland did something he almost never does: He refused. *No Way Home,* the climax of Holland's *Spider-Man* trilogy, picks up immediately after 2019's *Far From Home,* with Peter Parker being unmasked as Spider-Man and falsely accused of the murder of Mysterio. (Oddly, Parker and Zendaya's MJ spend the opening scene being chased through New York by the press. "It's art imitating life, except I can't swing away in real life," Holland says.) Unable to handle the fallout, Parker asks Doctor Strange to intervene, accidentally causing a cataclysm of multiverse-breaking proportions. Somehow—I haven't seen the movie—that cataclysm prompts the return of familiar adversaries from Sony's previous *Spider-Man* iterations, including Alfred Molina's Doctor Octopus and, if rumors are to be believed, Willem Dafoe's Green Goblin and Jamie Foxx's Electro. "When they first came up with a concept of what they wanted to try and do, it was the impossible concept," Holland says. "But they pulled it off."

Ever since news of those castings appeared, the internet has obsessed over whether or not Tobey Maguire and Andrew Garfield are also returning. "No one believes me, but they're not in the film,"

Holland has spent six years as Spider-Man. If he chooses to, he could easily do another 20. He is still two decades younger than Robert Downey Jr. was in *Iron Man.*

"I've talked to him about doing, like, 100 more," Pascal tells me. "I'm never going to make *Spider-Man* movies without him. Are you kidding me?"

Holland, however, isn't so sure. "Maybe it is time for me to move on. Maybe what's best for *Spider-Man* is that they do a Miles Morales film. I have to take Peter Parker into account as well, because he is an important part of my life," he says. But also: "If I'm playing Spider-Man after I'm 30, I've done something wrong."

He has other ambitions. "He talks about being James Bond a lot," says Jacob Batalon, his *Spider-Man* co-star. "*A lot a lot.*" He's been writing a script with his brother, Harry, and is currently gearing up to shoot *The Crowded Room,* an Apple TV+ drama about dissociative identity disorder. Pascal told me that she wants Holland to play Fred Astaire in a forthcoming movie (which might be a rare perfect casting). But after that? Holland doesn't know.

If he could, he'd spend six months backpacking around Europe. He'd go clubbing, get "sloppy drunk". He'd go to Glastonbury, stand in the middle of the crowd, feel again what it's like to be just one person in a mass of joyful bodies. He would, in other words, be a guy in his 20s, exploring what it feels like to be alive. "I just can't do that," he says.

He's certain of something: "I definitely don't think I want to be an actor for the rest of my life." Before Hollywood, Holland briefly trained as a carpenter, a craft he still loves. "I've always been really good with my hands. If something's broken, I can always figure out a way of fixing it." He has this romantic idea of "buying apartment buildings and renting them out cheaper than they need to be, because I don't need the money."

Lately, Holland has had another dream. It's a variation on a common theme: He'd met a woman, got her pregnant. Once, he'd have found it terrifying. "You don't know what you're going to do. How am I going to tell my mum and dad?" But this time he wasn't nervous at all. "After, I thought… I kind of miss my little girl now." Holland has always wanted to be a father. "I'd be very content with just being a stay-at-home dad, and producing a film here and there," he says. That's not to say that will happen right now. "I might start shooting *The Crowded Room* and go, 'You know what, this is what I'm going to do for the rest of my life.' Or I might do *Spider-Man 4, 5,* and *6,* finish when I'm 32, and never make another. I'm not sure what I want to do." That's the point. He's in control.

"Now as I'm getting a little bit older, I'm like, It's good to have things to work for. Just don't give 100 percent of your energy towards it," Holland says. "I'm trying to live my life a little bit more freely." GQ

Oliver Franklin-Wallis is a writer based in England.

Holland says. (If this is a lie, and it well might be, then don't hate him. That's work too. And really, isn't it better not knowing?)

The production of *No Way Home* sounds like total chaos. As the first day of filming approached, several key actors hadn't signed on yet. "Some people were trying to figure out whether they wanted to do it, and we needed all of them or none," Holland says. The movie was reportedly going to be released after the upcoming *Doctor Strange* sequel, but when that film was delayed by COVID, it was decided that *No Way Home* would go first, requiring changes to the plot. Even once filming was underway, the script was being rewritten on an almost daily basis. "You could ask the director, 'What happens in act three?' And his response would be, 'I'm still trying to figure it out,'" Holland says.

Anyway, the day finally came to shoot the big finale, "the crescendo scene, like, is this really fucking happening? It's crazy." Only, it wasn't working. "I kept stopping and being like, 'I'm so sorry, I just don't believe what I'm saying.'" The director, Jon Watts, took him aside, and Holland told him: It wasn't me. The scene was wrong. "We sat down, we went through it, and we came up with a new idea," Holland says. "Then we pitched it to the writers, they rewrote it, and it works great."

It's a story about standing up for yourself, and about how Holland has grown. "As a kid, a lot of my confidence was really fake," he says. "But, really, inside I was, 'Oh, my God, I'm fucking terrified.'" (Russo: "If he was faking his confidence, he is a hell of an actor.") Because here's the thing: That story about nerves being the same as excitement? It's true. But if you don't let your real feelings out, they tend to show up in other places, like in your dreams.

Holland doesn't have to fake it anymore. Don't get him wrong: He still wants you to like him. He just doesn't want to have to give you everything to do it. "I actually learned this from Elizabeth Olsen," he says. "She gave me an amazing piece of advice: 'No' is a full sentence. 'No' is enough."

BLAZER AND SHIRT
BY **BURBERRY.**
SUNGLASSES BY
AHLEM.

Giannis Antetokounmpo photographed on the Mediterranean Sea, at Costa Navarino, Greece.

SWEATER BY **ETRO.** HAT BY **WORTH & WORTH.** WATCH BY **OMEGA.** BRACELET BY **SHAY JEWELRY.**

ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

GIANNIS ANTETOKOUNMPO

His fairy-tale rise made him a sensation. But now, after turning the once-dismal Milwaukee Bucks into champions, he's becoming something of a legend. Inside the next whirlwind chapter for the NBA's most dazzling global star—who's deciding what he intends to conquer next.

BY **ZACH BARON**

Not long ago, Giannis Antetokounmpo watched his partner, Mariah Riddlesprigger, give birth to their second son, Maverick, and when he saw Maverick he immediately burst into tears. This happened with Antetokounmpo's first son, Liam Charles, too—that Giannis wept. "But I thought maybe it was because he was my first one," he told me. He doesn't think of himself as someone who cries, he said; he's survived too much deprivation, too many provocations, to be reduced to tears by just anything.

We were in the living room of his red-brick house in the Milwaukee suburbs, hiding out from the August sun. Mariah was napping in the other room. Liam, big now and curly haired, was wandering around saying hi to everything that moved. Mav was in Giannis's lap. Giannis was trying to explain just what these boys did to him when they arrived.

Giannis and Mariah named Liam in part after Antetokounmpo's father, Charles, who passed in 2017, and so Giannis thought that might have been part of it, too, at the time—that maybe he was crying out of delayed grief. Ever since his dad died, he'd felt an emptiness he didn't know how to fill, he said. Then all of a sudden here was this new being with his father's name. I lost somebody that I loved, Giannis thought, and now I've got somebody back that I love a lot. But his mother told him: Let the

memory of your father be the memory of your father. "You cannot fill that void," Giannis realized. He still thinks about Charles every day. When his team, the Milwaukee Bucks, won the NBA Finals in July, one of the first things Giannis did after the buzzer sounded was find a quiet place in a very loud arena to sit and talk to his father: "'Man, we've come a long way. I wish you were here to see this. Please watch me.' You know?" But Liam, Giannis decided, would be his own person, not a replacement for the father Giannis lost.

Then Giannis was in the delivery room again this past summer, marvelling at what Mariah had to endure. "Seeing what the body has to go through in order to bring this beautiful, sweet thing into the world, it's insane," he said. Giannis is one of five boys; looking at Mariah, he thought of his mother, who gave birth to her first son in Nigeria and then to four more after she'd emigrated to Greece, doing so without most of the painkillers or other comforts Milwaukee hospitals use to help mothers ease children into the world. In Greece, they were undocumented, citizens of no nation. No one helped them. "Six months before I came to the NBA, I was selling stuff in the street," Giannis told me. "My mom was in the market. I used to go help her. People don't know about this, but I did it." Epidurals? Extended hospital stays? Post-partum doulas? "She definitely didn't have access to any of it," Giannis said. "I'm like, 'Mom, you went through this for all five of us?'"

And then Mav emerged, and to his genuine surprise, Giannis started sobbing again.

By now, much of his story is known. How he was discovered as a gangly kid running around an Athens playground; how he didn't touch a basketball until he was 13. How he had yet to become even the best player on his second-division Greek team when he was drafted in 2013 by the Milwaukee Bucks, who picked him at 15. Who was this guy? Would he be any good? Well, this is what happened next: Most Improved Player (2017), Defensive Player of the Year (2020), two MVP awards (2019, 2020), and an NBA championship this past July. A journey unfathomable in its sheer improbability, its storybook ending, an ending that may in fact be just the beginning of something even more grand and unlikely. He is already back out there, defending his title. Got handed his championship ring and went right out and scored 32 points in 31 minutes against the Brooklyn Nets in the first game of the season.

Some players seem haloed in greatness from the moment we lay eyes on them. They don't always attain it, but you see it with athletes like LeBron James or Kevin Durant within seconds: They are playing a different, easier game; they are competing more against history, against gravity, against spectral forces in the dark, than they are against the regular guys around them. Guys who are talented but not great. I'd argue that Giannis was one of these guys, first: a curio, an intriguing combination of traits and potential, but no more than that. He was regarded, in his early NBA days, as capable, not destined. "He looked like a guy who was going to be a project," his long-time teammate Khris Middleton said. Giannis will tell you himself: "What I am today, nobody saw it. You know why nobody saw it? Because I didn't see it. Ask my mom. No. 'I thought you would be an NBA player and have a better life. Not what you are today.'"

What is he today? Something remarkable. Singular. One of one. All summer I'd be walking around, and flashes of the Finals, in which the Bucks beat the Phoenix Suns 4-2, would come back to me, unbidden. These moments are lore now. Giannis's block on Deandre Ayton at the end of Game 4, a feat of athleticism so impossible and otherworldly that it's even *more* confusing in slow motion, how he did it. Even to Giannis himself: "I look at the block—How the fuck did I do this shit?" This is a player who had fallen to the floor two weeks earlier in Game 4 of the Eastern Conference finals with a left-knee injury so gruesome that he told me his knee looked like an elbow afterward. "My leg was the opposite way," Giannis said. "To this day, I feel the effect, the traumatic stress. I still feel it, and I think I'm going to feel it until I die."

Somehow he played in all six games of the Finals anyway. And when he jumped to block Ayton's shot, that was the leg he jumped off. How the fuck is that possible? He was in one place and suddenly he was in a completely different place in about a millisecond.

In the shower, after the next game, he started cramping; his lips turned purple; his hands got white. "I'm naked, I only have my towel," lying on the trainer's table, he remembered. "I ask, 'Can you give me that trash can?' Throw up five times." They gave him an IV—he was so dehydrated it took them 45 minutes to find the vein. Then he went back to the hotel and got a second one. This happened again after Game 6, he said:

SHIRT BY **RALPH LAUREN.** TANK TOP BY **CALVIN KLEIN UNDERWEAR.** SHORTS BY **LOEWE.** SUNGLASSES BY **SAINT LAURENT BY ANTHONY VACCARELLO.** WATCH BY **TAG HEUER.** HIS OWN PENDANT NECKLACE (THROUGHOUT).

SHIRT BY **DOLCE & GABBANA.** PANTS BY **EMPORIO ARMANI.** SNEAKERS BY **NIKE.** HIS OWN WATCH BY **ROLEX.** BRACELET BY **SHAY JEWELRY.**

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"I DON'T WANT TO BE THE FACE OF THE LEAGUE. I WANT TO PLAY GREAT BASKETBALL. AFTER THAT, IF I DISAPPEAR IN THE NIGHT, GOOD."

that he needed an IV. In that game, he scored 50 points, even while there were possessions in the fourth quarter where it looked like he could barely walk up the floor. Went 17 of 19 from the free-throw line when all series he could barely make one of two. As pure an exercise of concentration and will as you could ever, or will ever, watch. Greatness achieved.

So: How does a now 26, formerly stateless kid from Greece become…this? A champion. One of the two or three best players in the league. Some of it, he said, is just luck, genetics. He is 6 feet 11. He's 242 pounds. He moves so gracefully around his own house, even with the leftover limp from his knee injury in last year's playoffs, that you are forced to re-evaluate how poorly you've been getting around all these many years on this earth: *Am I walking…wrong? Is there a better way?* But the NBA is full of men who are tall and acrobatic. The body, sure, whatever, it's impressive, but if you ask him how all this happened, what he'll say is: "I'm going to work as hard as possible. God gave me that gift."

Even the night his father passed. "I went to the gym," Giannis said. "He was there with me."

Stubbornness, persistence, hard work, going to the gym even on the night your father dies—that can get you pretty far. But Giannis, in the past few years, began running up against the limits of hard work, he said. There's a sports psychologist who works with the Bucks, and Giannis talks to him almost every day. They work on coping mechanisms. They work on anxiety. They work on being in the moment. They work on separating the guy who is arguably the best basketball player in the world right now from the guy holding his newborn child trying to knock down the walls between him and his own feelings. One thing the sports psychologist led Giannis to try was: Cry! And not just at the birth of your sons.

"I had to break down the barriers I was talking about and be by myself, cry, and realize, 'I got to fucking help myself,'" Giannis said. "This guy, he's like, 'Sometimes, being persistent and stubborn? Sometimes it fucks you up.'"

He looked down at the sleeping baby he was holding. "You're not going to put the curse words in here, right?"

He can be like this: a little innocent. Seemingly unsure of himself, despite his absolute certainty pertaining to basketball. "Silly," Khris Middleton told me, affectionately. Superstar athletes have long been conditioned to think of themselves as brands, spokespeople for the million- and billion-dollar businesses they front. This is not Giannis. "I don't want to be the face of the league," he said, adamantly. "I want to play great basketball. After that, if I disappear in the night, good. Don't even talk about me, don't even remember me. I don't care."

He called out to Mariah: "Babe, do you want to be the face of the league?"

"No," Mariah said, sleepily.

He loves basketball but is not of basketball. "Let me show you downstairs," he said, suddenly.

He padded down the carpeted stairs in his socks, through his not particularly giant suburban house, which he bought from an old teammate, Mirza Teletović. The door frames were too small for him, and he had to duck under each one. Next door, the ground had been torn up and the foundation laid for a second house for his mother, who currently lives upstairs.

Down in the basement, he has a weight room. Soon he will have a basketball court, too, connected to it. Giannis famously would go to the Bucks practice facility so often, at so many different times of day and night, before and after games, that the team sometimes took action to keep him out so he could rest: "They had this term, 'lockout', that you cannot go to the gym, because they know I will go to the gym. Now, see what I did?" He gestured toward the construction outside, toward what would soon be his own facility. "Fuck lockout. Sorry. Oh, my God, I'm cursing. *Eff* lockout. I build a gym right here."

He also has a slew of framed jerseys down in the basement. Some of the jerseys are hung, proudly, on the wall; others are stacked haphazardly on a pool table or near the bar stocked with alcohol that Giannis doesn't drink. Many are his, but curiously,

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he also has dozens of framed jerseys from other NBA players too, leaned up against the wall, or hung, or on the pool table.

He's got a framed Blake Griffin Pistons jersey. He's got one from Kevin Durant, and one from Steph Curry. James Harden—"A lot of people think that I have beef with James Harden, which is not true," he said, because if it were, why would his jersey be here? He continued the tour. "This right here is from Luka Dončić, the wonder boy. Anthony Davis. L.A., you know him. [Nikola] Jokić. I love the game! Oh, this is mine from this year. This is from the MVP I won. The All-Star MVP. Bradley Beal. Damian Lillard. Derrick Rose. I love Derrick Rose. LeBron James, man. Look! Look what he wrote for me."

Many of the jerseys are signed, some with brief messages, but this particular one, a LeBron Lakers jersey, had a longer note, and Giannis read it out loud: "To Giannis, a.k.a. The Greek Freak. Continue to strive for greatness every single day you wake up, brother. Love everything you represent to this game of hoops, and off the court as well. The limit is not the sky. Go beyond it." LeBron had signed off with the sketch of a crown.

Giannis beheld the inscription proudly: "That's big time, you know?"

He is aware, if distantly, that by the hyper-masculine competitive codes of the NBA, you are not supposed to venerate your competitors, let alone collect their jerseys, let alone adoringly read what those competitors write on those jerseys to note-taking reporters. But Giannis has never been good at those codes, and at times he has found freedom in defying them. For instance, he said, "People that talk to the sports psychiatrists and stuff like that, they label us 'soft'. We've seen that in the past, like, 'Oh, man, I'm having anxiety.' 'Man, you're soft. Go deal with that.' That's how it's labelled. That's why it's hard for people to talk to somebody and open up. Even for me, it was extremely tough."

He's convinced that all the really good athletes are secretly in some form of therapy. Some not so secretly. They use a word or a phrase and he knows. The other day, Giannis was watching *Naomi Osaka,* the three-part Netflix docuseries, and was struck by the way the tennis star spoke about the challenges that have come with her success. "She wasn't happy, she wanted to get away from the game and all that stuff, and it's fucking hard, man," Giannis said. He was talking about her, but he was talking about himself too. "I started doing it when I was 18. When you're that young and you're doing it, people don't understand the amount of pressure because at the end of the day, you don't only have to perform and be the best, you have the big brand that you got to fucking carry on your shoulder. You have your own country, Japan, that you got to carry on your shoulder. Or Greece, in my case. You have all these people that you got to take care of. Sometimes…"

He paused. "I've never said this: I don't want to fuck up."

That fear of fucking up, of not being able to carry the weight and support the people around him, was what drove him for a long time. He said he was just walking around Milwaukee yesterday, remembering what it looked like to him when he first got here. "You're 18," he said. "You have very small experience of life, of being by yourself. I came here, and I was scared. I never felt lonely in my life, and I was scared. I was going back to the hotel at 8:30 p.m. because I was scared. I was by myself."

Scared of what, I asked him.

"Scared of life! I was fucking 18," Giannis said. "I was a kid." Playing a sport that was still new to him with a bunch of grown men. "So, I was already scared of life, now you're putting me on the basketball court? I'm scared of these dudes, for sure. But you know what I knew? I have no fucking choice. I have no option. I can't fucking stop. If I stop everything, my family, I can't help them. I cannot be in a position to help them. So I kept going."

He went between home and the facility, the facility and home. "He lived in the gym," Giannis's long-time agent Alex Saratsis said. "He would sleep at the gym." Before Giannis met Mariah, that was literally all he did.

"I was on a mission," Giannis said. "That's why, seven years later, I had to fucking talk to somebody. Because I had issues now, you know? But there was no stopping me." For eight years he put his head down and chased greatness. Then he won a championship. Now, he said, he was working on all the things greatness cost him. Peace of mind. Life outside of basketball. A family. That kind of thing.

Just a year ago, Giannis's contract with the Bucks was slated to end, and he had to decide whether to stay in Milwaukee or leave. We know what happened next, of course. But the way it happened, I think, is instructive, and perhaps suggests something about Giannis and the unique, determined way he sets out to do almost everything in life.

"Everybody was texting me: 'Leave the team,'" he told me—other players, some of whom haven't talked to him

SWEATER BY **EMPORIO ARMANI.** SHORTS BY **RICK OWENS.** SUNGLASSES BY **DITA.** HIS OWN WATCH. BRACELET BY **SHAY JEWELRY.**

HIS OWN SUIT BY **G. PAPADOGAMVROS.** SWEATER-VEST BY **MSGM.** SUNGLASSES BY **DITA.** HIS OWN WATCH BY **ROLEX.**

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since he decided to stay. He understood, he said. "It's human. I will say I want to play with the best players; I wish K.D. was on my team, not against me. I wish LeBron was on my team, not against me. Steph, on my team." And the winters in Milwaukee were cold—"cold as shit", he specified. This would be an opportunity to never see another Milwaukee winter again. To raise his sons in a place where they might see the sun from time to time.

But there was something inside him that just wanted to do it the hard way, he realized. "I chose to stay here even with all the pressure because it's easier to leave. That's the easy thing to do. It's easy to leave."

There is an aversion to easiness with Giannis that can go deep. *Easy* is an epithet when he says it. *Easy,* in Giannis-world, describes almost everything that isn't pain, that isn't suffering, that isn't taking on long odds and trying to beat those odds. He regards the usual perks of being a player in the modern NBA—partying in the better Los Angeles clubs, recording in the better Los Angeles music studios, acting in Hollywood—as, basically, frivolous: "Being in movies? *Easy. Space Jam,* all this? *Easy. Easy.* I don't want it, though." He is intent on life itself, by which he means the painful stuff of existence, the stuff that neither money nor ability can finesse. Life? "It's hard, life." Or at least, his was. He pointed at his chest: "It moulds you to be this guy."

"I think he's never wanted to take an easy way out," Saratsis said. "In every aspect of life. He wants to be challenged."

In the end Giannis decided to stay in Milwaukee because it was difficult. And then, improbably, the Bucks won. "One challenge was to bring a championship here and we did," he told me. "It was very hard, but we did. Very, very hard. I just love challenges. What's the next challenge? The next challenge might not be here." It's not that he doesn't love Milwaukee, he said. But he was always wary of things becoming too easy. "Me and my family chose to stay in this city that we all love and has taken care of us—for now," Giannis said. "In two years, that might change. I'm being totally honest with you. I'm always honest. I love this city. I love this community. I want to help as much as possible."

Did this mean he was thinking about…leaving? I asked his agent.

"I don't think it's, 'I'm thinking about leaving the Bucks,'" Saratsis told me. "But I think he's genuinely like: 'Okay, I have reached the pinnacle. The next challenge is, let's repeat.' But what happens if you do repeat? What's the next challenge? What is that next barrier? When you think about it from a basketball perspective, by the age of 26, this kid has accomplished everything," Saratsis said. "So sometimes you're going to have to manufacture what those challenges are."

On his home's second floor, Giannis keeps a room full of unworn shoes. A literal room, filled to the literal top, in a house with only a normal abundance of rooms. "How many of these shoes do you think I wear?" Giannis asked me, mischievously, and then answered his own question: "I don't wear them."

There's every Jordan known to man here, and shoes that Virgil wrote on. "I'm going to sell this shit," he said, with a grin. That's why he's devoted an entire room of his own living space to them. Not to wear them but to keep them as an investment.

Mariah's father makes jokes about Giannis. "You know when the birds go in the morning?" Giannis said, quoting the joke. "'*Cheep, cheep*'—cheap. That's who I am." On airplanes, he used to buy coach tickets and would seek out whoever was sitting in the exit row and ask them to switch: "'You're a Bucks fan?' 'Yes.' 'Want two tickets for the game? When? November?'—I'm a great seller, that's what you don't know. I'm a great seller—'Would you trade my seat with you?'"

I said that if Giannis Antetokounmpo approached me to switch seats on a commercial flight, I'd probably be surprised that he wasn't on a private jet.

"Nobody has money for a private jet, man. Hell no, man."

Not even to Greece?

"Why would you spend $150,000 to one-way trip there? That's $300,000. The market makes 6 to 10 percent every year…. He's laughing."

(I was laughing.)

"So, you can make, for the rest of your life, with that money you just spent, 24- to 30,000 a year, because that's what the market makes on average. If you take that money and you take it away, that 24- to 30,000 growth every year goes away—correct? So why would I teach my kids that?"

Giannis drives a 2011 GMC truck he bought not long after he got here, or a Mercedes he bought in 2018, or the G-Wagon he got for free. "I don't put my money in my stuff that loses value," he said. Meals, sure. He and Mariah go out and eat well. "But ain't

nobody got time for spending money on clothes and time for...what's it called?"

A stylist?

"Fuck—sorry. *Eff* no. Man, let me tell you one thing. This is me. If you try to spend time on how you're going to look to the tunnel, man, you already took away focus from the game. Now, if you're talking about one thing I enjoy, I love watches."

Why? Because they increase in value. He named a few, and then asked that I not say which ones. He is trying to give less free promo, now that he's a champion: If you want your product to be mentioned by Giannis, from now on you're going to have to pay. As we talked, he'd be deep into some anecdote and then wonder if he was supposed to promote his businesses, the sponsorships he's already acquired, the investments—like the piece of the Milwaukee Brewers he just bought this week—he's already made. Is he supposed to promote his businesses? How does one do that in an interview? He was unsure. He settled for leaning into my recorder, listing his endorsements, then going back to whatever story he was telling.

A mosquito flew by, and he reached out one giant hand and closed his fingers around it.

"I caught that," he said, showing me.

After he won the NBA Finals, he went to Chick-fil-A with the Larry O'Brien trophy and the Finals MVP trophy and ordered exactly 50 nuggets—one for every point he scored in the last game of the series. But he's trying not to tell that story anymore, either, until Chick-fil-A pays up. His teammates went to Vegas the night the Bucks won, but he didn't. "They understand," he told me. His teammates have been around him enough to know that they don't really know him at all, he said. "If you asked them if they really know me: 'No.' I'm about work, and then I dip." Middleton said that it took him five years to feel like he knew Giannis even 50 percent—now, after eight, he figures he's up to 60 or even 90. But Giannis, he said, had matured too. "He's grown and realized he's the franchise player," Middleton said. "So he knows he's got to have some kind of chemistry with his teammates."

A few weeks before we met, Giannis flew to Greece and went to the Acropolis with his brothers and walked around with the trophies. And that was the extent of it. He is already done celebrating, he said. "It's over with. The championship is over with. Over with. Now, I'm working. In order for me to get better, I leave this championship bullshit stuff in the past." He is back to playing basketball this fall. Back on the hard path to the hard thing.

But before he put those memories away entirely, I asked him if he could just give me one or two—were there moments, in retrospect, that had stuck with him? That mattered? He thought about it and agreed to share a few: the IVs he got; the long sleepless nights between Game 5 and Game 6; the first frantic minutes of Game 6, when he kept rushing and getting ahead of himself, instead of being in the moment.

But what he wanted me to remember most, he said, was the end.

After the Bucks had won the game, "What happened?" Giannis asked me. "The team, everybody gathered around when they realized we won, and immediately Coach came and grabbed me. Go watch the tape. Coach came and grabbed me and I pushed him out of the way. I went to my family. I hugged my mom, I hugged my brothers, I hugged my wife-to-be, I hugged my son, then I sat down and thought about my dad, right?" They were in Milwaukee; the whole arena was going crazy. So were his teammates. But Giannis found a place to sit again, by himself.

Giannis asked that I pay particular attention to what happened next, because to him what happened next illustrates something essential about him. Some of it has to do with his family: how close they are, how much he depends on them. And I don't want to put words in his mouth; it was an image he offered, not an explanation. But without speaking for him, I think some of what he wanted me to understand was about the singular loneliness of the path. What "hard" actually means. In the end, greatness is fundamentally isolating. What you have to do to achieve it separates you from everyone else in a way that is difficult to undo.

The image was this: "Everybody was celebrating," he remembered. "They said, 'Giannis, you got to go up there.' I said, 'No, I'm good.'" They told him he might win the MVP, and if he did, he was going to have to go up and get it. He said fine—if I win, let me know. And then he won, so he got up there and he said a few words. He turned to Middleton, whom he'd been playing with since the very beginning, and said, "Khris, we did it." He held the trophy for a moment. And then he walked away again, to be by himself.

"Go and see the picture," he said. "I'm the captain of the team. Go and see the picture when they lift up the trophy. I'm not there." GQ

Zach Baron is GQ*'s senior staff writer.*

SWEATER BY **TOM FORD.** SHORTS BY **STÜSSY.** HAT BY **OAS.** SUNGLASSES BY **RAY-BAN.** NECKLACE BY **TIFFANY & CO.** BRACELET BY **SHAY JEWELRY.** HIS OWN WATCH BY **ROLEX.**

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AYUSHMAN KHURRANA

PHOTOGRAPHER: THE HOUSE OF PIXELS
STYLIST: SELMAN FAZIL
HAIR: TEAM HAKIM'S AALIM
MAKE-UP: HINAL DATTANI
ENTERTAINMENT DIRECTOR: MEGHA MEHTA
PRODUCTION: SHIVANJANA NIGAM, ANOMALY PRODUCTION

AVANI LEKHARA

PHOTOGRAPHER: MANASI SAWANT
STYLIST: SELMAN FAZIL
ENTERTAINMENT DIRECTOR: MEGHA MEHTA
PRODUCTION: SHIVANJANA NIGAM

PRABH DEEP

PHOTOGRAPHER: MANASI SAWANT
STYLIST: SELMAN FAZIL
MAKE-UP: KIRAN DENZONGPA (FEAT.ARTISTS)
ASSISTANT MAKE-UP: KARCHUNG GURUNG & LHAKPA DOLMA LAMA
ENTERTAINMENT DIRECTOR: MEGHA MEHTA
PRODUCTION: SHIVANJANA NIGAM, ANOMALY PRODUCTION

MANOJ BAJPAYEE

PHOTOGRAPHER: MANASI SAWANT
STYLIST: SELMAN FAZIL
HAIR & MAKE-UP: SACHIN JADHAV
ENTERTAINMENT DIRECTOR: MEGHA MEHTA
PRODUCTION: SHIVANJANA NIGAM
LOCATION: VIBE MUNNAR RESORT & SPA

AMIT AGGARWAL

PHOTOGRAPHER: MANASI SAWANT
STYLIST: SELMAN FAZIL
HAIR: MAYANK NARANG
MAKE-UP: ASHIMA KAPOOR
ENTERTAINMENT DIRECTOR: MEGHA MEHTA

TAAPSEE PANNU

PHOTOGRAPHER: MANASI SAWANT
STYLIST: SELMAN FAZIL
MAKE-UP: GUIA BIANCHI (ANIMA CREATIVE MANAGEMENT)
HAIR: ANU KAUSHIK (SPARKLE TALENT MANAGEMENT)
ASSISTANT HAIR: PRATIKSHA MUCHANDIKAR
ENTERTAINMENT DIRECTOR: MEGHA MEHTA
PRODUCTION: SHIVANJANA NIGAM

CHAITANYA TAMHANE

PHOTOGRAPHER: MANASI SAWANT
STYLIST: SELMAN FAZIL
HAIR & MAKE-UP: KIRAN DENZONGPA (FEAT.ARTISTS)
ASSISTANT HAIR & MAKE-UP: KARCHUNG GURUNG & LHAKPA DOLMA LAMA
ENTERTAINMENT DIRECTOR: MEGHA MEHTA
PRODUCTION: SHIVANJANA NIGAM, ANOMALY PRODUCTION

NEERAJ CHOPRA

PHOTOGRAPHER: MANASI SAWANT
STYLIST: SELMAN FAZIL
HAIR: MAYANK NARANG
MAKE-UP: ASHIMA KAPOOR
ENTERTAINMENT DIRECTOR: MEGHA MEHTA

CHETESHWAR PUJARA

PHOTOGRAPHER: MANASI SAWANT
STYLIST: SELMAN FAZIL
HAIR & MAKE-UP: SAHER A. GANDHI (FAZE MANAGEMENT)
ENTERTAINMENT DIRECTOR: MEGHA MEHTA
PRODUCTION: SHIVANJANA NIGAM

VIKRANT MASSEY

PHOTOGRAPHER: MANASI SAWANT
STYLIST: SELMAN FAZIL
HAIR: VINIT SETHI
MAKE-UP: ROHAN SUBODH SHELKE
ENTERTAINMENT DIRECTOR: MEGHA MEHTA
PRODUCTION: SHIVANJANA NIGAM, ANOMALY PRODUCTION

RADHIKA MADAN

PHOTOGRAPHER: THE HOUSE OF PIXELS
STYLIST: SUKRITI GROVER
HAIR & MAKE-UP: KIRAN DENZONGPA (FEAT.ARTISTS)
ASSISTANT HAIR & MAKE-UP: KARCHUNG GURUNG & LHAKPA DOLMA LAMA
ASSISTANT STYLISTS: VASUDHA GUPTA & VANI GUPTA
ENTERTAINMENT DIRECTOR: MEGHA MEHTA
PRODUCTION: SHIVANJANA NIGAM, ANOMALY PRODUCTION

ATHER ENERGY

PHOTOGRAPHER: NIMISH JAIN
STYLIST: SELMAN FAZIL
ENTERTAINMENT DIRECTOR: MEGHA MEHTA
PRODUCTION: SHIVANJANA NIGAM

VICKY KAUSHAL

PHOTOGRAPHER: MANASI SAWANT
STYLIST: SELMAN FAZIL
HAIR: TEAM HAKIM'S AALIM
MAKE-UP: ANIL ASHOK SABLE
ENTERTAINMENT DIRECTOR: MEGHA MEHTA
PRODUCTION: SHIVANJANA NIGAM, ANOMALY PRODUCTION

TOM HOLLAND

PHOTOGRAPHER: SHARIF HAMZA
STYLIST: MOBOLAJI DAWODU
GROOMING: LARRY KING
TAILORING: MICHELLE WARNER
SET DESIGN: SEAN THOMSON AT THE MAGNET AGENCY
SET ASSISTANT: MAXIMILIAN KINDERSLEY
PRODUCTION: FARAGO PROJECTS
LOCATION: PECKHAM LIBERAL CLUB/LOCATION COLLECTIVE

GIANNIS ANTETOKOUNMPO

PHOTOGRAPHER: ARNAUD PYVKA
STYLIST: MOBOLAJI DAWODU
GROOMING: ATHENA SKOUVAKIS FOR THIS IS NOT ANOTHER AGENCY
TAILORING: MARGARITA DOSOULA
PRODUCTION: POPLIGHT PRODUCTIONS

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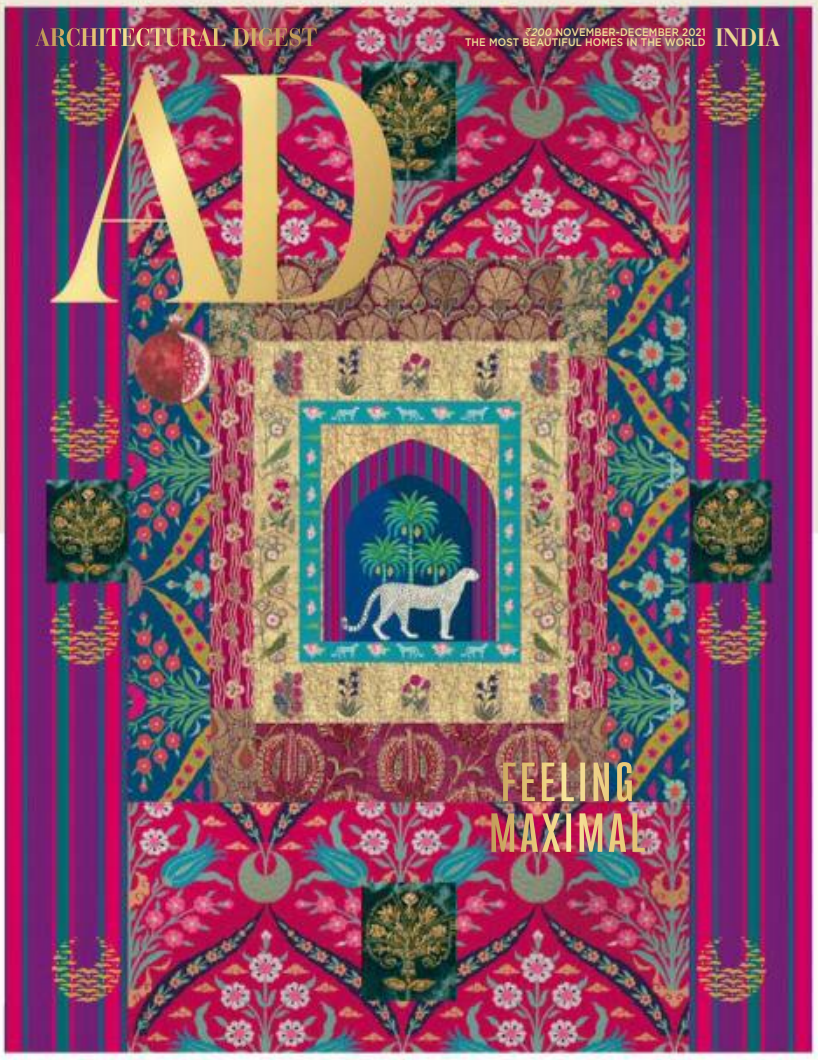

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Blink-182's Mark Hoppus got cancer—and then accidentally shared his diagnosis with the public over social media. Turns out getting sick renewed his faith, healed his old friendships, and reminded him what makes life worth living.

BY **CHRIS GAYOMALI** PHOTOGRAPHS BY **PAT MARTIN**

It was another perfect spa-blue morning in Beverly Hills when Mark Hoppus, a pop-punk legend, accidentally told the world that he had cancer. This was back in late June, and Hoppus had just taken a photo of himself strapped into a chemotherapy chair, an image he wanted to share. But being woozy from the Benadryl and cocktail of cell-destroying drugs, his clumsy fingers made haptic contact with the wrong cluster of pixels on his phone. Thus the photo—the caption read, "Yes hello. One cancer treatment, please"—was transmitted not to his green circle of "close friends" on Instagram, but to his entire following of more than 1 million. A tragicomic oopsie.

And then, a mess: First in the form of a concerned text from his manager, asking if he meant to do that. Then the radio stations started calling. And then a fire hose of frantic text messages from friends Hoppus hadn't yet told. He quickly took down the post, but the genie was out of the bottle.

"Throughout the day as I'm getting chemotherapy and more bags of chemicals are being dripped into my body, other people are reaching out and they're like, 'Dude, what's going on?'" Hoppus remembered. But he could pay only intermittent attention to what he'd unleashed. "Chemo is like being on the worst international, overnight flight where you can't sleep or get comfortable," he told me. Later, as his wife, Skye, drove him home, Hoppus tapped out a brief statement: "For the past three months I've been undergoing chemotherapy for cancer. I have cancer. It sucks and I'm scared, and at the same time I'm blessed with incredible doctors and family and friends to get me through this."

He had been diagnosed a couple of months earlier with stage 4 diffuse large B-cell lymphoma, an aggressive form of blood cancer, the same kind his mom had.

For those who glimpsed it, the image of Mark Hoppus there in the chair that morning was shattering, largely because of how Mark Hoppus is etched into our collective memories: young, defiant, indefatigable—a forever avatar of cheery SoCal dickishness.

The band that made Hoppus famous, Blink-182, jumped into the public eye in the late '90s, flanked on one side by soft, radio-friendly boy bands like the Backstreet Boys and on the other by over-caffeinated nu-metal outfits like Limp Bizkit. A skate-punk trio from San Diego, Blink possessed a paradoxical knack for writing pop songs—a fact that helped explain why they were abhorred by many of the bands that inspired them. (In a track called "Fun Things to Fuck (If You're a Winner)", Fat Mike of NOFX completes an otherwise unprintable tercet with "Fuck fans of Blink-182.") Yet instead of shunning fame, Blink's members embraced it—a middle finger to the punk orthodoxy's own middle finger flashed at everything else. They gave their albums delinquent titles like *Take Off Your Pants and Jacket* (say it phonetically) and pranked anyone who dared enter their juvenile orbit. "When I first got in the band and we would be in airports or any public restroom, Mark would go in and pull his pants all the way down to his ankles. We'd just be looking at this grown man with his bare butt out, peeing into a stall," Travis Barker, Blink's longtime drummer, told me.

"Mark and I were ridiculous," said Tom DeLonge, the band's co-founder and former guitarist. "There were so many things that were just so inappropriate. I can't even bring them up. People were not safe interviewing us ever in a room, because I would turn off the lights and then I would turn the lights back on and it would be illegal, what was happening."

If you were born in the 1980s or early '90s, even if you were never a fan or a wilful listener of a Blink song, the lyrics to their biggest hits—"All the Small Things", "I Miss You"—are somehow already encoded into your subconscious, sitting there, just a few blood-alcohol-content percentages away from being karaoke'd without a teleprompter. In the years since

"I went through this whole period of like, not *why* me, but *of course* me. Why wouldn't it be me? We've had so much good luck and good fortune... that *of course* I was due. I was due for something tragic."

Hoppus says he was overwhelmed by the support he felt when his diagnosis was made public.

those early hits were recorded, the group has cast a surprisingly large and enduring shadow in the culture. Their various achievements and exploits included (but were hardly limited to) presciently preaching about the existence of UFOs; starring on an MTV reality show; surviving a deadly plane crash; selling more than 50 million records worldwide; collaborating with Lil Wayne on a short-lived tour that spawned the most questionable rap mash-up ever; dating a Kardashian; and, of course, inspiring a whole generation of emo bands and SoundCloud rappers. None of it was simple or uncomplicated: They have broken up at least twice before reassembling into a line-up that today features only two of the primary three (Alkaline Trio's Matt Skiba, a long-time friend of the group, has since been slotted in for DeLonge, whose ambitions have often coloured him as the principal trio's iconoclast).

Hoppus, 49, lives in Beverly Hills, near the top of a perfect hill where the phone reception is spotty and the shrubbery is protuberant. When we met in his backyard in early October, he was fresh off his sixth and final round of chemotherapy and was eager to show me the new hobby he picked up over the summer: collecting succulents. "After my first round of chemotherapy, I went out and got a cactus that has this really cool mutation in it," he said, showing me the plant. "And I really felt attached to it because that's a mutated plant, and my own mutation happening at the same time." In person Hoppus is tall, about the height of your average NBA point guard. His signature spiky anime hair was gone, replaced by an undetectable layer of light peach fuzz. When he removes his Dodgers hat he looks like a powerful telepath who wants to recruit you to his school for gifted youngsters.

He's usually a vivid storyteller, witty and sardonic. He's been podcasting since the mid-2000s, hosted a music interview show for a few years on Fuse, and regularly streams on Twitch. But lately he's been forgetting things: the names of close friends, places he's been, stories that Skye tells him. Retrieving a memory seems to now take Hoppus an excruciating extra beat. "I felt so shitty," he told me. "And the brain fog is so bad. The chemo brain is just heartbreaking to me because I can feel myself diminished mentally right now." Which is why the Instagram slip-up, for him, felt so out of character. "Maybe part of me subconsciously posted it to my main, but I definitely didn't do it on purpose," he said. "But I don't know. It kind of felt like a Band-Aid had been ripped off and I was able to be honest with people."

The first inkling that something was wrong with his body came last spring, when Hoppus felt a weird knot in his shoulder while he was sitting on his couch playing *Ghost of Tsushima* on PlayStation. He had recently been vaccinated and was eager for the world to start opening up again; he'd been struggling mentally during a particularly dark period of depression. Hoppus

decided to get his shoulder checked out a few days before meeting with a new therapist.

"So I walk into the therapist's office and I'm like, 'Oh, hello. How are you doing? Very nice to meet you. Thanks for making the time—hang on a second. I have to take this call,'" Hoppus said. It was his doctor; the diagnosis was lymphoma. What followed was a blur: More tests were necessary, but he needed to start chemotherapy as soon as possible, which meant he had to get a port installed in his arm right away. "And I was like, 'Okay, cool. Thank you very much.' I hang up the phone and turn to [the therapist]. 'Oh, hi. So, yeah, I have cancer. Where do we start?'"

The odd timing of the call was a blessing, Hoppus said. Therapy helped him navigate the murky first few weeks where he was still processing his cancer and how it would reorient his life. "I had a really dark time after finding out," he said. "I went through this whole period of like, not *why* me, but *of course* me. Why wouldn't it be me? We've had so much good luck and good fortune, and things have kind of fallen into place for me specifically for so long, that *of course* I was due. I was due for something tragic."

Hoppus had long been a specimen of healthy living. He'd go on long bike rides regularly, and was notoriously obsessive about hygiene, even pre-COVID. ("People made fun of me because I'd always sanitize my hands everywhere.") He isn't much of a drinker and has long adhered to a mostly vegan lifestyle, which changed after his diagnosis and his doctor recommended that he start eating meat again, to keep his strength up. "I've had a lot more red meat than I ever have in the last probably 10 years," Hoppus said.

The diagnosis had prompted him to revisit other things too. When we initially spoke in September, he told me that he'd recently been going back over old Blink tracks—songs he'd played thousands of times—discovering that they've suddenly taken on new meaning. Of note was "Adam's Song", a sombre number that Hoppus wrote in his 20s, from the imagined perspective of someone who felt suicidal but ultimately made the decision to carry on the hard work of living. "I've had a lot of thoughts about my own mortality, a lot of thoughts about what happens when I'm gone," he said. "And so I've been listening to 'Adam's Song', thinking, Yeah, tomorrow holds such better days."

When I was a dipshit teenager, one Christmas my parents gifted me an Epiphone bass from Guitar Center. It sounded cheap and twangy, but I was stoked. After opening it, I went to the family computer, printed out some tabs, and retreated to my room to learn how to play the thing. The first song I learned was "Dammit", Blink-182's breakout hit from their second studio album, *Dude Ranch*. The song was easy to learn, no more than three or four notes hammered into oblivion, undergirding a sing-shouty chorus sung by Hoppus that includes the refrain: "Well I guess this is growing up."

The song is ostensibly about a relationship in disrepair and the lessons learned from those mistakes. And it functions as a tidy encapsulation of what made Blink-182 so successful: They sang about girls and heartache and masturbation, but fundamentally the band's music is about perseverance. Like emo, pop punk is, by design, antithetical to anything resembling cool; it's earnest, cathartic, and sometimes cheesy music about being on the outside of something, looking in. In a sense, Hoppus and DeLonge were the voice for a generation of disaffected suburban kids, bored out of their minds and conscripted to a comfortable drudgery, who just wanted to get through another day and post sad lyrics as their away messages.

One of the reasons the trio worked so well together is that the band was always hierarchically flat, and its members were "all completely different", said Barker. Their creative sensibilities tugged the band's music in different directions, but it would always stubbornly spring back into a familiar shape, like pizza dough. Hoppus was the glue guy, holding the centre; DeLonge was the experimental one with big ambitions; and Barker was the only one who knew how to play his instrument.

"I'm not comparing Blink to the Beatles," said Hoppus, "but if we were, I would be Paul, Tom would be John, and Travis would be George." ("I'd be fine with just being Ringo and being the drummer," said Barker, after I relayed this comparison to him.) Yet you can't achieve balance without conflict, which, like all long-running bands, Blink had in abundance. In 2015, after more than two decades playing in the band, Tom DeLonge abruptly quit. Or took a break, depending on whom you ask. It was a point of contention within the group, but essentially DeLonge says he needed space to focus on other things, like his family.

Still, fans were surprised when, shortly thereafter, it was announced that Matt Skiba, whose band had toured with Blink previously, had joined Blink-182 to replace Tom. "Mark invited me out for lunch at this beautiful vegan eatery," said Skiba. He thought they were going to talk about a children's record they'd been meaning to record as the Cereal Killers, an experimental punk band they were kicking around, but Barker came to lunch, too. "They both sat down and told me that Tom had quit. I was still thinking about him leaving the band when they morphed it into a question: Would I be interested in playing with Blink? And Mark said to me, 'We know your schedule. We already looked. It's just a matter of: Do you want to do it? We would have to start rehearsing immediately.' And I said, 'Well, of course I want to do it.'"

Were you worried about Tom's feelings at all? I asked Skiba.

"It wasn't until an hour or two later that I started to consider Tom's feelings towards it. From what they told me, he left them holding the bag and I've always left it between them. It's not really any of my business."

Skiba continued: "Tom's been nothing but a sweetheart to me, but it's like somebody dating your ex-girlfriend or your ex-wife or whatever. It's weird. No matter how cordial or adult everyone is, it's awkward. But, people just want to see drama. They want to see a fight. Neither Tom nor myself are that kind of person. Even if it stung for him a little—and I think he said it's a little weird—he's man enough to admit that. I certainly didn't take any joy in causing him any discomfort or whatever, but he and I have always been friends."

Schisms within friend circles are as natural as they are awkward, but few disruptions play out as publicly as Blink's. I asked Hoppus what he would say now to a younger version of himself about navigating the creative tensions within the band. "Probably the thing that I've learned over the years is it's not about me," he said after a brief pause. "People do things for themselves. People do things for their family. Anybody else's [issues] are not a reflection on me. I can control myself, my thoughts, my actions. And beyond that, it's not about me."

On the day Hoppus found out about his cancer, he texted Barker the news, as well as Skiba. By coincidence, after a few weeks of not really talking, DeLonge hit up Hoppus randomly. "The way the universe works is strange because I reached out to Mark because I needed him to sign this piece of paper that had to do with my divorce," DeLonge said in a recent interview. "Only because of that call did I learn he had cancer. And he told me on the phone. I was like, 'Wait, what?'" Hoppus added: "Tom sent me a picture of him in front of these women in his video shoot and they were all in lingerie. He texted me like, 'Hope you're doing good. I'm over here making art!' And that's when I told him."

In any case, DeLonge would soon visit Hoppus's house, and because the universe works in strange ways, Barker happened to be there as well. "I didn't know Travis was going to show up," DeLonge said. "And I was like, 'Oh, shit, band meeting!'"

The three of them sat in Hoppus's backyard for hours, opening their hearts up to one another, talking about everything. DeLonge went deep about his father's death and the metaphysics of the universe and learning to heal. They talked about old wounds within the band and the scars they've accumulated along the way. For all the dick jokes and toilet humour, the trio have experienced their share of darkness. Notably, in 2008, Barker was in a plane crash that killed four people but spared him and his friend Adam "DJ AM" Goldstein. They survived but at a cost: Barker was instilled with a severe fear of flying and Goldstein died of an accidental drug overdose just a year after the accident. (Shortly after their meeting in Hoppus's backyard, in August, Barker flew for the first time in over a decade when he went to Cabo San Lucas with his fiancé, Kourtney.)

The conversation that day was, for each of them, a salve. "We got into more life stuff. What we've learned over the years about ourselves. How we've grown, how nothing really matters when it boils down to what we were dealing with in that moment," said DeLonge. "And so, it wasn't some big meeting about Blink-182, it was more about brothers meeting and saying, 'How do we support Mark?'"

The morning I met Hoppus at his home happened to be a day removed from some rare good news. "Just saw my oncologist and I'm cancer free!!" he'd written on Instagram 24 hours earlier, this time purposefully. "Thank you God and universe and friends and family and everyone who sent support and kindness and love."

The chemotherapy cycle had worked—just like it worked for his mother. "She's been my greatest resource this whole time," said Hoppus, collecting himself. "Nobody knows what it's like except somebody who's gone through chemotherapy. And so being able to talk to my mom and just be like, 'I feel shitty today. I feel really awful,' and have her be able to say, 'I know what you mean. I've had those days as well….'"

Hoppus still isn't quite sure what tomorrow holds, exactly. But who is? He hasn't really thought about what Blink-182 might look like now that he's cancer-free, but he's open to any permutation of the band, really, including line-ups with Tom back in the fold. "We haven't really talked about that, but I'm open to anything in the future," said Hoppus. "I don't know how that would work if it's all four of us. Like we're all going to live in the same house again?"

Hearing Mark, Tom, and Travis all talk about each other, you get a real sense that there's a deep affection there, annoyances and all, loving one another as only brothers can. ("There is nobody with better dick jokes than us," added DeLonge.) For Hoppus, the past year not only deepened his appreciation for his family and friends, but it taught him how to handle unexpected horror with humility, grace, humor, and—this is the new one—an open heart that's still learning how to feel deserving. "I'm totally overwhelmed with the support and love," he said, pausing. "I don't know. People online I have never met sending support. Cancer survivors of the same lymphoma that I had even put together a video where they covered a Blink song, and it made me cry." That song, of course, was "All the Small Things".

Before I left, Hoppus wanted me to take a close look at the top of his head. He was excited: His hair was showing tiny signs of growth. Of returning to normalcy. "My armpit hair is still totally gone," he said, "but if you look close, all this white hair is just the shitty cancer hair, and then you can see the actual dark hair growing back in a little bit."

You got a free bleach job, I joked.

"I know," he replied, beaming. "I wish I'd had this in the mid-'90s." GQ

Chris Gayomali is a GQ *articles editor.*

Honouring the people, the moments, and the outfits that made this one of the most fun and freaky years ever for fashion.

DESIGNER OF THE YEAR

Demna Gvasalia for Balenciaga

In 2021, Demna Gvasalia redefined the reach and possibilities of fashion design. Under his leadership as creative director, Balenciaga has challenged our assumptions about celebrity, luxury, popular culture, and even reality itself. As designers struggled throughout the pandemic to adjust to virtual fashion shows, Balenciaga seized an opportunity to plunge into the metaverse and partnered with Epic Games, the developer behind *Fortnite,* to create a video game for fall 2021. A few months later, Balenciaga boot pants and hourglass jackets showed up on Gucci's runway, part of what both brands (which are owned by the conglomerate Kering) deemed "the hacker project". Over the summer, Gvasalia directed two of Kanye West's stadium-size *Donda* listening parties—and in the midst of all this, relaunched Balenciaga couture, recharting the industry's direction from hype to handcraft. In September, Balenciaga ruled the Met Gala red carpet, and cemented a partnership with *Fortnite* that allowed players to dress their characters in its signature looks. At Paris Fashion Week the next month, the house served up a rare moment of genuine surprise and delight, debuting a 10-minute-long Balenciaga-packed episode of *The Simpsons.*

Gvasalia is a populist interested in subverting fashion; with each of these projects he is dismantling, brick by brick, the false boundary between the vernacular and luxury. His platform Crocs, satirical prom suits, and leather Ikea bags—all at luxurious price points—get a rise from the masses and expose the clichés of fashion elitism. But with video games, cartoons, and megawattage celebrities, Gvasalia is finding unexpected ways to reach his people.

"I am not interested in anything average, including the average consumer," Gvasalia tells me in an email. "If someone is personally offended by Crocs, there might be a more serious problem within that person than the design of a shoe." As for those who think they're getting one over by pointing out the absurdity of Balenciaga's multi-thousand-dollar versions of mass-produced lowbrow objects: "Everything I do has a reason for it," he says. "The trashy prom suit or an 'unreasonably expensive' market bag did not just accidentally slip into my collection. Do

38
Balenciaga
paris
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MATT
GROENING

I know that this may not be 'understood' by the average social media [critic]? Yes I do. Do I care? I am pretty sure you know the answer. I just do fashion that I love and enjoy, it is really as simple as that."

Gvasalia ascended through the fashion industry over the past six years as a provocateur, but he now sits atop it as a lover—as its most electric practitioner and biggest fan. The Georgian-born designer, who is 40, yanked streetwear and an ambivalent Eastern European menace into the luxury business, first as the de facto head of the collective Vetements, and then, starting in 2015, as the artistic director of Balenciaga. Over the past two years, Gvasalia appears to have shed the angst of a designer proving himself and is now a clear-eyed believer in the power of fashion.

"I am happier now than I used to be five or two years ago," the designer says, reflecting on this change in attitude. (Incidentally, it was two years ago that Gvasalia left Vetements, in part to focus more on Balenciaga.) "I am much more connected to myself, my creative vision, and my artistic mission. I am a happier person now and I am in love." He married musician Loïk Gomez in 2017. "Even though my relationship to fashion has never changed—I loved making clothes ever since I was eight years old. It's my longest love affair so far to which I am very loyal despite the fact that I have been hurt by it many times." Here, he added a winking emoticon.

This attitude has had joyous implications for the clothes. In relaunching couture at Balenciaga, Gvasalia radically reimagined suiting as a symbol of masculinity's complex state rather than a vestige of aspirational macho panache, partly because of his steadfast belief in gender-fluid design. "I do not think of any gender when I make clothes," he says. "I just make them for anyone who loves and wants to wear them." He put male-identifying models in four-inch heels as "a symbolic act of liberation from those absurd boundaries".

Simultaneously, Gvasalia has deepened his relationship to celebrity, turning one of the most transactional aspects of the fashion industry into pop performance art. Justin Bieber appeared in the brand's fall campaign, then performed at the Met Gala and Balenciaga's after-party. For that night's red carpet, Gvasalia dressed, among others, Elliot Page in a couture suit, and Kim Kardashian West in what Gvasalia called a T-shirt but was actually more like a black body shroud that rendered the most overexposed person alive as a void. Gvasalia posed alongside her, similarly shrouded, leading many to wonder whether it was really them—and whether it even mattered at all.

"I did not start dressing celebrities in any strategic way," Gvasalia says. It is, however, working. "Since Kim and I walked the Met Ball the online interest in Balenciaga seemingly grew 500 percent."

Gvasalia continued this theme with his October fashion show in Paris, staging the runway as a red-carpet entrance to a theatre. Once Anna Wintour, Page, Offset, and Cardi B were tucked into velvet seats around Gvasalia, lights went down and suddenly we were in Springfield: Gvasalia had spent the past year secretly working with *The Simpsons* creator Matt Groening's team to create a 10-minute episode of the show. "One reason we did it," says Al Jean, the long-time *Simpsons* producer and writer largely responsible for the Balenciaga partnership, "is [Gvasalia] was so clearly a fan and student of the show, so we knew that we could trust them there." The Simpsons team was less familiar with Balenciaga, but as James L. Brooks, another *Simpsons* producer, says of their approach: "Innocence and stupidity are such great advantages."

The *Simpsons* project showed how Gvasalia's Balenciaga is now as much represented by global celebrities and the people who follow their every move and fit as by Berghain regulars. "My Balenciaga is for those who understand, value, and enjoy what I do," Gvasalia says. "It is for the people who are not afraid to be different, and, yes, it is for Kanye, it is for Kim, and for thousands of other people who wear the clothes we make. It is for someone who truly loves fashion, not for people who have time to debate Met Gala looks for hours. If one needs to debate it for hours, it means they do not understand what fashion really means and their debate stays in that tiny box of their personal comfort zone." In other words, if you open your mind, you might find love. **—RACHEL TASHJIAN**

NEW WARDROBE STAPLE

The Skirt

▶ Fashion hall of famers like Marc Jacobs—and, you know, bagpipers—have worn skirts for years, and designers like Raf Simons and Yohji Yamamoto have featured them on the runway since the '90s. But when Russell Westbrook, Jordan Clarkson, and Dan Levy arrived at Thom Browne's runway show this fall in resplendent, avant-garde kilts, it was clear that the skirt had officially transcended the tired debate over gender in fashion. While you won't yet find them on the racks of mass-menswear stores like J. Crew now—head to Celine, Comme des Garçons, or SSENSE instead—you can bet the style will trickle down soon. **—SAMUEL HINE**

From left: A look from Molly Goddard's fall 2021 collection; Russell Westbrook at Thom Browne's spring 2022 show; a look from Celine's spring 2022 collection; Kid Cudi in Vuitton at the Met Gala.

PREVIOUS PAGE: BFA/DONDA (BACKGROUND PHOTO); GETTY IMAGES (COLLAGE SMOKE AND LIGHTNING, 5); THEO WARGO/GETTY IMAGES (MICHAELA COEL); COBRA TEAM/DONDA (KANYE WEST IN MASK); JEFF KRAVITZ/FILMMAGIC/GETTY IMAGES (TRACEE ELLIS ROSS); ALL OTHER PHOTOS COURTESY OF BALENCIAGA. THIS PAGE: BEN BROOMFIELD (MOLLY GODDARD); GILBERT CARRASQUILLO/GC IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES (RUSSELL WESTBROOK); CELINE PHOTO COURTESY OF BRAND; THEO WARGO/GETTY IMAGES (KID CUDI). OPPOSITE PAGE, GUCCI: GREGOIRE AVENEL/COURTESY OF GUCCI.

LOOK OF THE YEAR

Gucci, Fall 2021, Look No. 16

SUNGLASSES
Sporty, cycle-inspired black frames with gold metal rims and the Gucci logo in gold lettering on black temples.

SUIT
Chartreuse stretch velvet with satin details.

SWEATER
Gold wool turtleneck with all-over-sequin embroidery detail.

BAG
Brass mini bag with GG Supreme motif and leather strap.

SHOES
Leather-sole moccasins in grey leather with Horsebit and web detail. Paired with camel cotton socks with tone-on-tone Gucci logo.

▶ Gucci creative director Alessandro Michele on the look of the year:

"This look is very meaningful. It speaks to the roots of the brand and the essence of my work. A suit in a bold, acidic, unusual colour that conveys the idea of an elegance also shaped by the refinement of the hue and the combinations. The suit is paired with something apparently unsuitable—this Lurex and fully embroidered ring-neck sweater. I believe this look talks about me and what I brought to Gucci: a great sense of colour and a concept of styling that gives men the opportunity to have a wider and freer playground. This image, this colour, this look are the essence of a certain type of masculine beauty and refinement."

—NOAH JOHNSON

WATCH OF THE YEAR

Cartier Tank

▶ The Tank is a spectacular shape-shifter of a timepiece. Beloved by Tyler, the Creator and Rami Malek, it also once found devotees among the likes of Muhammad Ali and Princess Diana. It comes in mossy green, deep cabernet, and yellow gold—a mix of unlikely and classic flavours. It's militaristic, originally inspired by an actual French battle tank, yet also represents the pinnacle of elegance. Other related and bizarrely shaped vintage Cartier watches like the Crash and Pebble are exploding in value at auction houses, some doubling in price this year, but no watch has persevered quite like the 100-year-old Tank. Still, by relaunching the more-affordable Must line this year, Cartier has ensured that Tanks remain relatively attainable—even as its popularity skyrockets. **—CAM WOLF**

GROUP FIT OF THE YEAR

'The French Dispatch' Cast at Cannes

▶ Before the pandemic, red-carpet events often felt sterile: guys shuffling in well-tailored navy and black suits. But pandemic-enforced distance from these types of gatherings made hearts grow fonder—and fits grow bigger. Nowhere was that more apparent than at the Cannes Film Festival, where stars of Wes Anderson's new film, *The French Dispatch,* gathered an ensemble of gloriously unharmonious looks. Timothée Chalamet traded in his Tom Ford suit for merch from the Safdie bros' production company, Elara Pictures. Anderson did his thing in neo-preppy tailoring; Tilda Swinton was a sharp counterpoint in a Haider Ackerman suit. But for true style aficionados, it was Bill Murray's double watch that sent this pic into the stratosphere. The photo of the crew swiftly became internet dynamite as the foursome came to represent just about any kind of quartet ("tiktok, twitter, instagram, fb," one writer tweeted). The best red-carpet photo of 2021 was fodder for a rare day of fun online and a reminder that style is at its most powerful, meme-able, and culturally relevant when everyone flies their freak flag. **—CAM WOLF**

'THE FRENCH DISPATCH' CAST: STEPHANE CARDINALE/CORBIS/GETTY IMAGES. CARTIER TANK: MARTIN BROWN (PHOTO); SHARON RYAN FOR HALLEY RESOURCES (PROP STYLIST).

Aimé Leon Dore

Prada

Celine

BREAKTHROUGH DESIGNER OF THE YEAR

Eli Russell Linnetz for ERL

▶ If most young designers require a handful of years to hone their vision, Eli Russell Linnetz emerged fully formed as a fashion godhead. Sure, the wunderkind came with excellent credentials—after assisting David Mamet, he became a protégé of Kanye West, eventually directing the video for "Fade", and then made a name snapping portraits of Lady Gaga and Hailey Bieber. But in 2020, Linnetz leveraged a different kind of support when, at the urging of Comme des Garçons and Dover Street Market president Adrian Joffe, he launched his first full men's collection with DSM. ERL's easy, colourful sweatshirts, long underwear, gym shorts, and corduroys hit like a mandate for California dreaming. This year, his puffers became a celebrity must-have, and he debuted a perfume, called Sunscreen. He burst into a new realm of notoriety when he dressed A$AP Rocky for the Met Gala, swathing the musician in a shrunken tuxedo and a silk patchwork quilt he picked up at a California thrift store. Linnetz's fashion ambitions mark the arrival of a true original whose clothes embody the screaming possibilities of being 17 for those who are ages beyond their last yearbook photo. In other words, it's fashion world-building at its finest. **—RACHEL TASHJIAN**

SHOE OF THE YEAR

The Loafer

▶ This spring, after a year of being locked indoors, it felt like the entire country was itching to step out in some honest-to-goodness shoes again—but maybe not so willing to give up the comfort and convenience of the slippers they'd been living in around the clock. That's how the already ascendant loafer became the footwear choice of the moment: all the dressy, hard-bottomed goodness you crave, with no pesky laces to tie. And right on cue, a parade of unimpeachable loafers arrived from every corner of the fashion universe. **—YANG-YI GOH**

STORE OF THE YEAR

Aimé Leon Dore, 214 Mulberry Street, NYC

▶ Members of the neo-prep, post-streetwear New American Sportswear cult have been mobbing Nolita for a few years now, keeping the retail dream alive at the flagships for brands Noah, Saturdays NYC, and, the buzziest of them all, Aimé Leon Dore. On any given day outside the cream-coloured shop and café, opened in 2019, you can witness first-hand how a clothing brand can become the linchpin of a subculture as young people in ALD New Balances, Yankees caps, and mohair cardigans swarm the block sipping lattes and snapping 'grams, waiting their turn to shop the latest drop inside. Wondering about the future of brick-and-mortar? Just ask the boss, Teddy Santis. He's usually perched out front. **—NOAH JOHNSON**

AIMÉ LEON DORE: GETTY IMAGES. LOAFERS, ELI RUSSELL LINNETZ AND ERL RUNWAY PHOTOS COURTESY OF BRANDS.

RED-CARPET RULER OF THE YEAR

Thom Browne

▶ Lil Uzi Vert is one of the world's pre-eminent fit gods, a man who owns more clothes from more luxury labels than there are books in the Library of Congress. According to him, though, there's only one designer he wears every day without fail. "Thom Browne is cool as hell," Uzi says. He's sitting in Browne's marble-clad New York flagship, dressed in one of Browne's signature shrunken grey suits, with a neon-lit space helmet—the trademark of his new pseudonym AstroCat—cocked back on his head. "It makes me feel more than unique," he says of the clothes, gazing down to admire his ensemble. "It makes me feel complete. It makes me feel like no one else exists."

Uzi is hardly alone in his devotion to Browne. Over the past few years, in fact, few designers have been responsible for more electric celebrity fashion moments. LeBron James bought Browne suits for the entire Cleveland Cavaliers roster in 2018. Cardi B won the 2019 Met Gala in a labyrinthine feathered Browne concoction, and more than a dozen (!) attendees of the 2021 edition—Erykah Badu, Evan Mock, Sharon Stone, and Pete Davidson (in a dress) among them—rolled through in staggering Thom Browne looks. Dan Levy racked up a quartet of Emmys in 2020 wearing a Thom Browne pleated kilt, and the designer was a force at this year's Grammys (Phoebe Bridgers in a shimmering skeleton gown), Oscars (*Minari* scene-stealer Alan Kim in a short tuxedo), and New York Fashion Week (Russell Westbrook in a flowy white skirt).

All of this star power is relatively new for Browne, and it's lent a fresh energy to his work. For someone whose reputation was built on the precise and methodical manner with which he approaches every aspect of his life—from his fastidious tailoring to his clipped haircut—there's a fluid, expansive diversity to the people Browne chooses to dress. "The most important thing is that they're true individuals," Browne says of his taste in ambassadors. "They're really true to themselves, and they do something. We live in a world where some people are famous for not doing very much, which is not interesting to me at all. I like people to put the time in and be serious about what they do, and not care about what anybody else thinks."

Wearing Thom Browne, then, marks you as a member of an exclusive club—but, like, an *actually good* exclusive club. "His work draws a certain type of personality," the artist Amy Sherald says. "If I was walking down the street and I saw somebody that was wearing Thom Browne, automatically I would feel a kinship. The same kinship I feel when I walk into a room full of businesspeople and maybe one person's an artist—you kind of already know each other."

Browne's long-time friend Whoopi Goldberg adds: "People are always surprised to see me wearing Thom Browne. People just don't see me in it. They see tall, lithe people. They don't realize that everything he makes, everyone can wear. It's universal. He sees me [in his clothes], and I love that."

Twenty years after Browne designed his first high-water suits, it feels more than ever like the world has finally caught up to his vision. "That's the key to success," he says. "Doing your thing, and just doing it and doing it and not being swayed by everything else going on."

Browne's loyal followers serve as proof of that. "It's really the only thing AstroCat wears," Uzi says. "Thom Browne is the only one that reminds him of home." **—YANG-YI GOH**

Thom Browne, Lee Pace, Charles Melton, Aminé: grooming by Kumi Craig using La Mer at The Wall Group. Whoopi Goldberg, Amy Sherald, Anh Duong, Alan Kim: hair by Ayumi Yamamoto at Bridge using Kérastase; make-up by Allie Smith at Bridge using Chanel.

From left: Aminé, Amy Sherald, Anh Duong, Charles Melton, Alan Kim, Thom Browne, Whoopi Goldberg, Lee Pace, Lil Uzi Vert.

PHOTOGRAPH BY **CHARLIE ENGMAN**

ACCESSORY OF THE YEAR

Pearls

▶ Now that they've arrived on the set of Saturday Night Live thanks to ex-scum-bro Pete Davidson, and in the Major Leagues thanks to self-described bad bitch Atlanta Brave Joc Pederson, pearls have officially gone mainstream. Think of it as radically modern, gender-transcending masculinity—by way of granny's jewellery box. —SAMUEL HINE

From left: Pete Davidson, A$AP Rocky, Joc Pederson.

SNEAKERS OF THE YEAR

Adidas x Wales Bonner

▶ In a bog of overhyped sneakers from overhyped collaborators, English designer Grace Wales Bonner's Adidas are the thinking-person's kicks. Over the course of two collections, Wales Bonner has marinated three-striped sneakers like the Samba, Nizza, and SL 72 in international flavours, drawing from the British Jamaican community and her own dad's wardrobe, Jamaican dancehall culture in the '80s, and European football. She churns these influences into vibrantly coloured throwback styles and Sambas with homespun crochet details. The Adidas x Wales Bonner collaboration won't make you a StockX kingpin, but there are few better sneakers to remind you the whole point of shoes is to wear them. —CAM WOLF

SHOW OF THE YEAR

Louis Vuitton Spring-Summer 2022

▶ The fashion film rose to prominence this year, as designers searched for new ways to engage with audiences that broke from the traditional runway. But none of these video projects were as essential and impactful as the film Virgil Abloh made for his spring-summer 2022 Louis Vuitton collection, titled *Amen Break* after the widely sampled drum beat that is foundational to hip-hop and jungle music. Released this June, it is a gorgeous 15-minute fashion epic that stars legendary musicians Saul Williams, GZA, and Goldie, and the young French actor Issa Perica. "I was interested in exploring the idea of transmission," Abloh told *GQ* in an email. "The act of passing something from one person to another, activating waves of change across generations." The "Amen" break is the metaphor, he said: "The film reflects on a historic moment in Black art and culture when electronic music and hip-hop emerged like twins from the same egg, and trickled into every part of the globe." **—NOAH JOHNSON**

COMEBACK OF THE YEAR

Diesel by Glenn Martens

▶ Diesel's low-rise, boot-cut jeans helped create the premium denim wave that swept the early noughties. And many of us invested a small fortune in them, only to see the trend pass. But now that Y2K has re-emerged as a fashion buzzword, the Italian denim brand has come roaring back with Belgian designer Glenn Martens, creative director of conceptual Parisian label Y/Project, at the helm. Martens started at Diesel in 2020, and has already reinvigorated the brand with his signature asymmetrical silhouettes and radical proportions, creating pieces that take a progressive approach to conventional denim for the jeans-hungry masses. He's also dipping into the archives—a recent Diesel x Diesel collection included zeitgeisty leather bombers and baggy jeans that Martens revived from the '90s. But his focus, he has said, is actually sustainability, taking on every aspect of the business: from the raw cotton to the washes to the production chain. For a brand the size of Diesel, that's more than a talking point. It's an opportunity to make a difference. **—TEO VAN DEN BROEKE**

OPPOSITE PAGE: ALEX HOOKS/NBC/NBCU PHOTO BANK VIA GETTY IMAGES (PETE DAVIDSON); JIM SPELLMAN/GETTY IMAGES (A$AP ROCKY); DAVID J. GRIFFIN/ICON SPORTSWIRE VIA GETTY IMAGES (JOC PEDERSON). ADIDAS X WALES BONNER: MARTIN BROWN (PHOTO); SHARON RYAN FOR HALLEY RESOURCES (PROP STYLIST). THIS PAGE: LOUIS VUITTON SPRING-SUMMER 2022 AND DIESEL PHOTOS COURTESY OF BRANDS.

A man of exceptional sensibilities James Fleming, founder of Aberlour spirits, lived by the family motto (bestowed on it by the legendary Robert the Bruce) - 'Let the deed show', when translated means 'actions speak louder than our words'. And yes, James Fleming did let the spirits that he so lovingly produced do all the talking. For the proof of the spirits lies in the experience. This is the same precious legacy that makes each bottle of Aberlour, an exceptional spirit.

UNLOCKING THE MAGIC

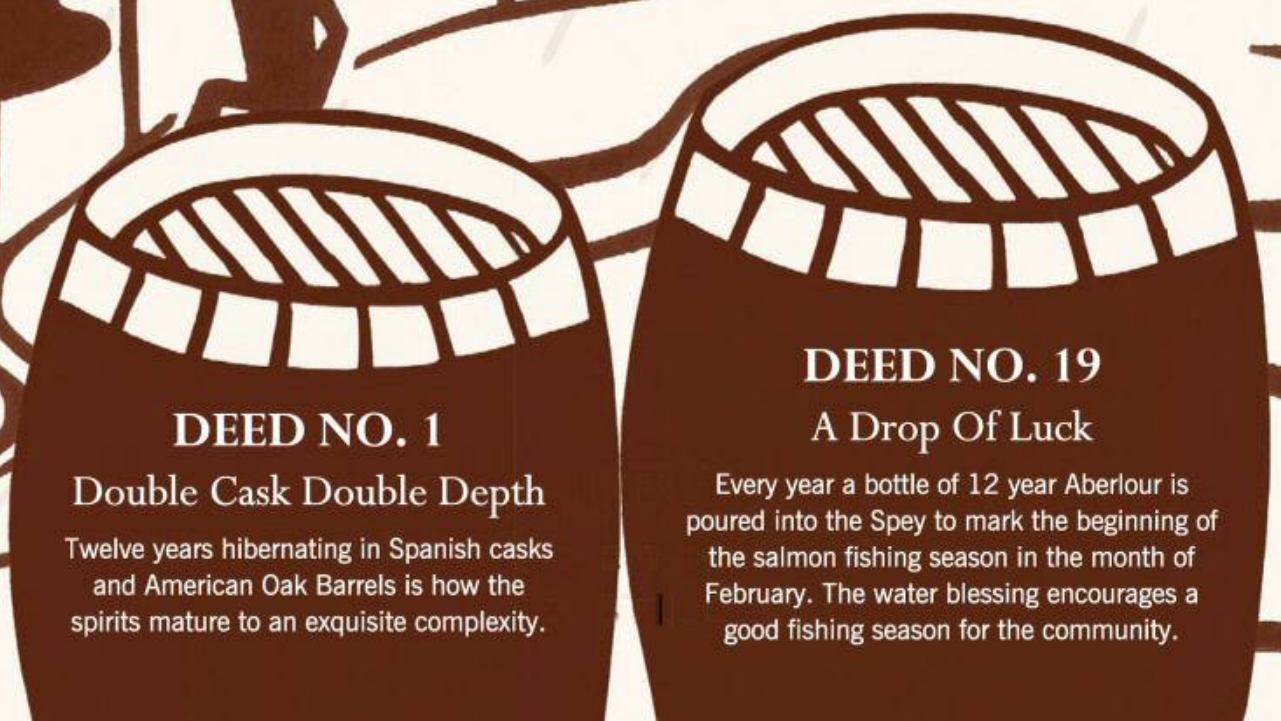
James Fleming had an astute sense of business garnered from his years as a dealer of grains for many local distillers. In 1879, he set up his own distillery with the idea of creating a spirit of exceptional distinction. He got himself a slice of land in the Scottish village of Aberlour, and set up the distillery on the site of St. Drostan's. Situated at the confluence of the rivers Lour and Spey, the distillery is a short distance away from the peaks of Ben Rinnes. Pure spring water for making the spirits is drawn from the Lour, and the maturing spirit in the warehouse beneficially inhales the moist Speyside air.

Despite facing several calamities, the distillery to this day is reputed for the role of modernisation and technology in keeping it abreast with the times. Yet the traditional working character of the place remains the same. Its range of superlative single malt spirits are marked by layers of complexity and velvet richness.

Aberlour distillery produces a spirit of exceptional quality, boasting characteristics that are clean, crisp, and fruity with striking depth.

ABERLOUR
– EST. 1879 –
DISTILLERY

Let the



DEED NO. 1

Double Cask Double Depth

Twelve years hibernating in Spanish casks and American Oak Barrels is how the spirits mature to an exquisite complexity.

DEED NO. 19

A Drop Of Luck

Every year a bottle of 12 year Aberlour is poured into the Spey to mark the beginning of the salmon fishing season in the month of February. The water blessing encourages a good fishing season for the community.

The spirit comes in 12, 16, and 18 years.

PRECIOUS DEEDS FROM NATURE

The lifeblood of the spirits of Aberlour is the pristine spring water cascading down the slopes of the granite girth of Ben Rinnes, before it debouches into the Lour valley and wends its way to the distillery. The plentiful rain and snow that falls on 'The Ben' is filtered through layers of peat cloaked in fragrant heather, influencing the flavour and character of the spirits. Only the trace elements from the granite of the mountain's surface gets added to the water rather than minerals, ensuring the water remains very soft. The precious spring water, which is as pristine as it gets, is delivered by nature to the distillery. The air too in the Scottish Highlands is clear and bracing, and the soft Highland mist also seeps into the maturing spirit leaving an indefinable imprint.

LET THE DEED SHOW

Rather than boasting about the distinctive qualities of his distinctive Aberlour spirit, James Fleming remained true to his family's motto since the days of Robert the Bruce, 'Let the deed show'. He was of the firm belief that legacy is what we leave behind. You may be at the top but how you journeyed there is what brings the respect and creates that legacy. It is an important aspect of success and an inseparable ingredient of your personality. It is what you do and not what you say that matters.

DEED *show*

DEED NO. 9

Nothing But Barley

Each malted barley delivery undergoes strict scrutiny to ensure it's of the purest and the finest quality.

DEED NO. 22

A Long-Standing Legacy

James Fleming was not the type of man who looked for reward or recognition for his kindness, even when he built the penny bridge after a young boy's life was claimed by the fast-flowing Spey.

WATCHES AND FURNITURE

A designer's greatest challenge is to create something that's both perfectly functional and perfectly beautiful. Which is why watches and furniture are perhaps the most fetishized objects in the design world. Here, we pair them up.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **KEIRNAN MONAGHAN** AND **THEO VAMVOUNAKIS**

SET DESIGN BY **ANDREA STANLEY**

ZENITH CHRONOMASTER

REVIVAL EL PRIMERO A385 ON LADDER BRACELET

The Zenith El Primero, originally released in 1969, changed watchmaking forever by introducing the first-ever automatic chronograph calibre. It also just looks killer—thankfully, Zenith recently introduced an extremely faithful tribute to the original.

LOUNGE CHAIR BY WARD BENNETT FOR BRICKEL ASSOCIATES, U.S. (1960s)

Largely self-taught, Ward Bennett designed over 150 chairs in his lifetime. Stylish clients like Gianni Agnelli were drawn to his simple forms and obsession with comfort.

TAG HEUER MONACO

WITH SILVER DIAL IN TITANIUM ON ALLIGATOR STRAP

The square-faced timepiece has been forever associated with racing ever since Steve McQueen wore a Monaco in 1971's Le Mans. Reintroduced in titanium, it looks as fast and futuristic today.

SERIES 8600 CHAIR BY HANS-ULLRICH BITSCH, GERMANY (1982)

With his steel-and-woven-metal chairs, German designer Hans-Ullrich Bitsch updated tubular Bauhaus aesthetics for a new era.

OMEGA SEAMASTER 300
IN BRONZE GOLD
ON LEATHER STRAP

Bronze is everywhere in the watch world right now—for good reason. Omega's brand-new Seamaster is clad in a custom bronze-gold alloy that will, like your favourite leather chair, develop a gorgeous patina over time.

LOUNGE CHAIR BY GARDNER LEAVER FOR STEELCASE, U.S. (1970s)

Steelcase was one of the furniture makers behind the coolly functional mid-century American office, and artist Gardner Leaver created the Michigan company's most coveted C-suite lounge chair.

AUDEMARS PIGUET ROYAL OAK

SELFWINDING CHRONOGRAPH IN YELLOW GOLD

Karl Lagerfeld's favourite watch, the Royal Oak, has been given a royal upgrade in this gold-and-money-green chronograph edition, of which only 125 were made.

MIRRORED SIDE TABLE BY JACQUES GRANGE, FRANCE (1975)

Interior design legend Jacques Grange has worked with a who's who of fashion royalty: Yves Saint Laurent, Valentino, and Lagerfeld, to name a few. Who knows what this disco-ready mirrored table would say if it could talk?

ROLEX EXPLORER

IN OYSTERSTEEL AND YELLOW GOLD

The Explorer is one of Rolex's most traditional watches, so the sceptics started clucking when the Crown put out a new two-tone model. But who says a watch designed for mountain climbing—like this one—can't be flashy too?

TRI 15 CHAIR BY ROBERTO GABETTI & AIMARO ISOLA FOR ARBO, ITALY (1968)

Italians Roberto Gabetti and Aimaro Isola first partnered in 1950 to start an architecture practice, then branched off into lighting and furniture—like this lounge chair—that spoke the same language.

ROLEX
OYSTER PERPETUAL
EXPLORER
SUPERLATIVE CHRONOMETER
OFFICIALLY CERTIFIED
SWISS MADE

PIAGET POLO SKELETON
WITH BLUE MOVEMENT IN STEEL

This Piaget Polo's case clocks in at a beefy 42 mm in diameter—all the better to show off the skeletonized interior. But unlike similarly show-offy watches, it's an ultra-skinny 6.5 mm thick.

MANDARIN CHAIR BY ETTORE SOTTSASS FOR KNOLL, ITALY (1986)

Ettore Sottsass led the Memphis Group, the Italian collective responsible for colourful, zany, and eventually Instagram-devouring design. In his hands, even sober dining chairs feel whimsical.

GRAND SEIKO SBGY007
ON CROCODILE STRAP

Leave it to the ever-elegant wizards at Grand Seiko to craft a dial that takes inspiration from "God's Crossing", as the rippling frozen-over surface of Lake Suwa, in central Japan, is known.

ALUMINIUM DINING CHAIR BY AMOS MARCHANT & LYNDON ANDERSON FOR ALLERMUIR, U.K. (1996)

Cast aluminium is often used for cookware, but designers Amos Marchant and Lyndon Anderson used it to give these chairs a space-age quality.

CARTIER TANK MUST

RED DIAL ON ALLIGATOR STRAP

In the '70s, Cartier began releasing its iconic Tank in era-appropriate funky colours. Four decades later, the richly coloured Must collection is back.

COFFEE TABLE BY J. WADE BEAM FOR BRUETON, U.S. (1970s)

No '70s shag pad was complete without one of J. Wade Beam's cantilevered gems. Same goes for a tastefully appointed 2021 loft.

CARTIER
SWISS MADE

THE SPIRIT OF BRAVERY

GQ Heroes in association with Glenfiddich celebrates the real life heroes who inspire a brighter tomorrow

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

When it comes to the realities of life, real heroes seldom wear capes, but rather, take on different roles with a dedicated valour. Bringing together the heroic figures who shape culture and the world around us, GQ Heroes in association with Glenfiddich celebrates these changemakers from diverse fields—from sports to business or entertainment. Interestingly, Glenfiddich's long-standing stance on heroic tales is also personified through their latest digital campaign—Glenfiddich Irrepressible. Narrating intriguing experiences written on paths discovered by embracing the unknown, Glenfiddich celebrates the spirit of experimentation driven by a sense of purpose.

These extraordinary personalities have not only exhibited excellence in their personal achievements, but have also brought much-needed inspiration and cheer in a difficult year. Each has demonstrated empathy, smarts, and courage, driving positive change to create a brighter future. *GQ* pays a rightful homage to them.

VIKAS KHANNA

A Michelin-star chef, Khanna launched Feed India in April 2020, supporting orphanages, old age homes, leprosy centres and trans communities across 125 cities.

KRIPAL AMANNA

When the pandemic struck, Amanna, a popular food vlogger took the lens off gourmet food and zoomed in on small businesses with big hearts struggling to make it.

RACHANA RANADE

Teaching a generation of Indians to save and invest, Ranade is a chartered accountant and YouTube sensation, guiding an audience of 2.88 million through the world of finance.

MIRABAI CHANU SAIKHOM

Setting the tone for India's best-ever medal haul at the Olympics, Mirabai Chanu won a silver medal in the 49 kg category of the women's weightlifting competition on the first day of the 2020 Olympics. It was also one of only two silver medals India won in Tokyo.

UPASANA KAMINENI KONIDELA

Vice Chairperson of Apollo Foundation, Konidela swung into greater action during the pandemic and provided quality healthcare to the rural areas of Arunachal Pradesh and Telangana.

P R SREEJESH

Winning a historic bronze medal in hockey—the first in 41 years—PR Sreejesh was one of the standout performers in the 2020 Olympics. As the goalkeeper of the Indian national hockey team, Sreejesh made crucial saves that helped the team recover from a poor start to the tournament.

SHAN VINCENT DE PAUL

Bringing the South Asian way of life to a global stage, Shan Vincent De Paul is a gifted hip-hop artist and lyricist with a keen eye for detail.

OUT
LOUD

The season for smart layering is upon us, and this year's fall-winter favourites are a smorgasbord of textures. From neat tweed trenches to floor-sweeping suede overcoats, this year is all about going bold from the outside in.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **BEN LAMBERTY**
STYLED BY **DAVIAN LAIN**

SUIT, JUMPER, AND SHIRT BY **GUCCI.** SHOES BY **TOD'S.**

OPPOSITE PAGE, LEFT: COAT BY **ETRO.** TURTLENECK BY **BRUNELLO CUCINELLI.** TROUSERS BY **DSQUARED2.**

OPPOSITE PAGE, RIGHT: COAT BY **ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA.** BLAZER BY **AMIRI.** T-SHIRT BY **ALEXANDER McQUEEN.**

COAT, TROUSERS, AND BOOTS BY **VALENTINO.** SHIRT, TURTLENECK, AND NECKLACE BY **AMIRI.**

OPPOSITE PAGE, LEFT:
COAT, TROUSERS, SHOES, AND GLOVES BY **PRADA.**

OPPOSITE PAGE, RIGHT:
COAT, T-SHIRT, TROUSERS, AND SHOES BY **PRADA.**

JACKET, TURTLENECK, AND TROUSERS BY **CANALI.**

OPPOSITE PAGE: COAT, SUIT, SHIRT, AND SHOES BY **LOUIS VUITTON.**

COAT BY **SACAI.**

OPPOSITE PAGE, LEFT: COAT, JACKET, TURTLENECK, AND TROUSERS BY **JIL SANDER.** BOOTS BY **HERMÈS.**

OPPOSITE PAGE, RIGHT: JACKET, PARKA, SHIRT, AND TROUSERS BY **HERMÈS.** BOOTS BY **VALENTINO.**

STYLING ASSISTANTS: **JACQUELINE BENN SCHUPPE; BENJAMIN GARDEN.**
PHOTO ASSISTANT: **DRAKE WOODALL.**
GROOMING: **RIAD AZAR** AT **THE WALL GROUP.**
MODELS: **ALEXIS CHAPARRO, MARWAN EL ANBARI** AT **NEXT MODELS; MATT VAN DE SANDE** AT **MARILYN NY.**
DIGITAL PROCESSING: **JAVIER ALVAREZ.**

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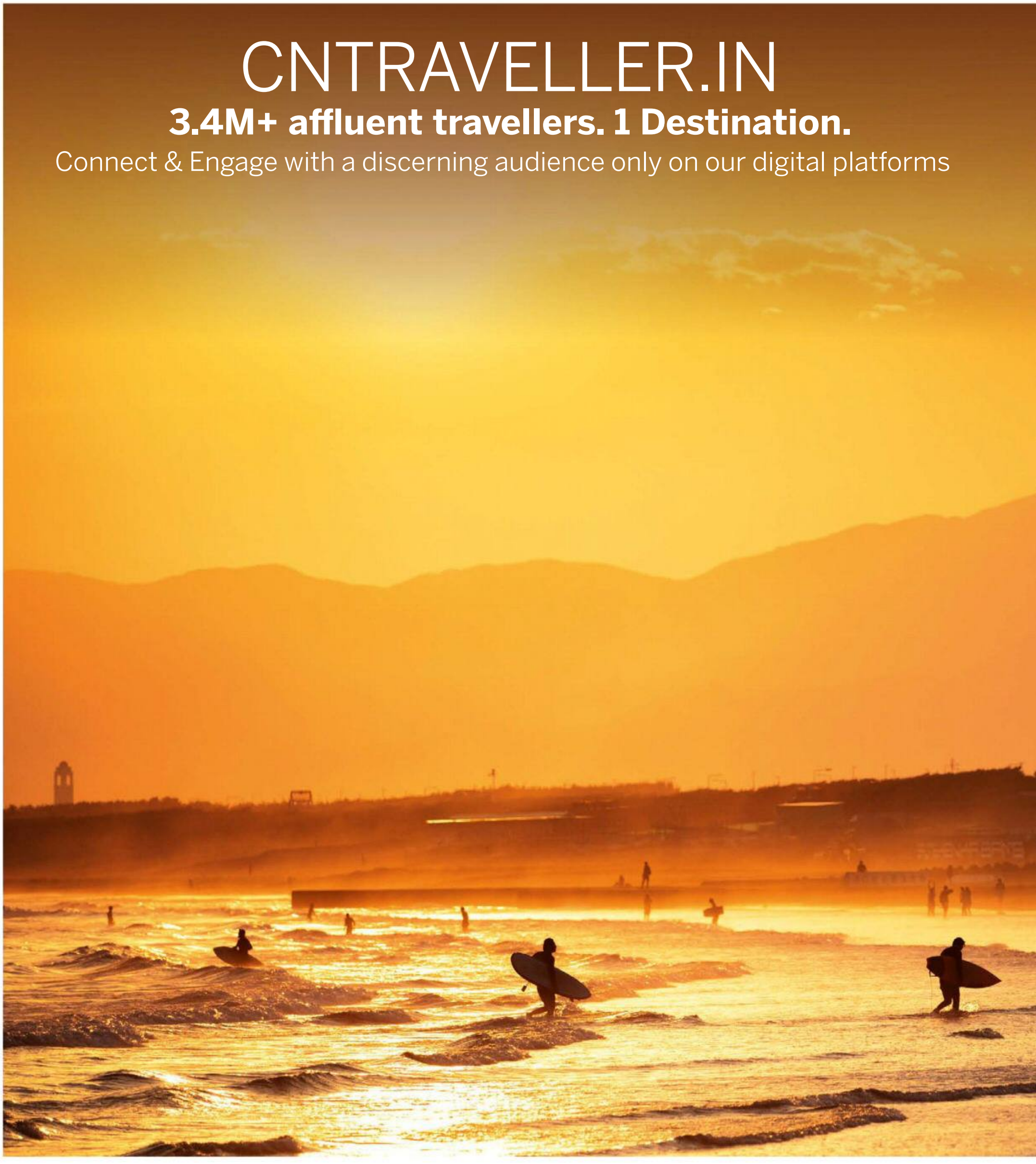

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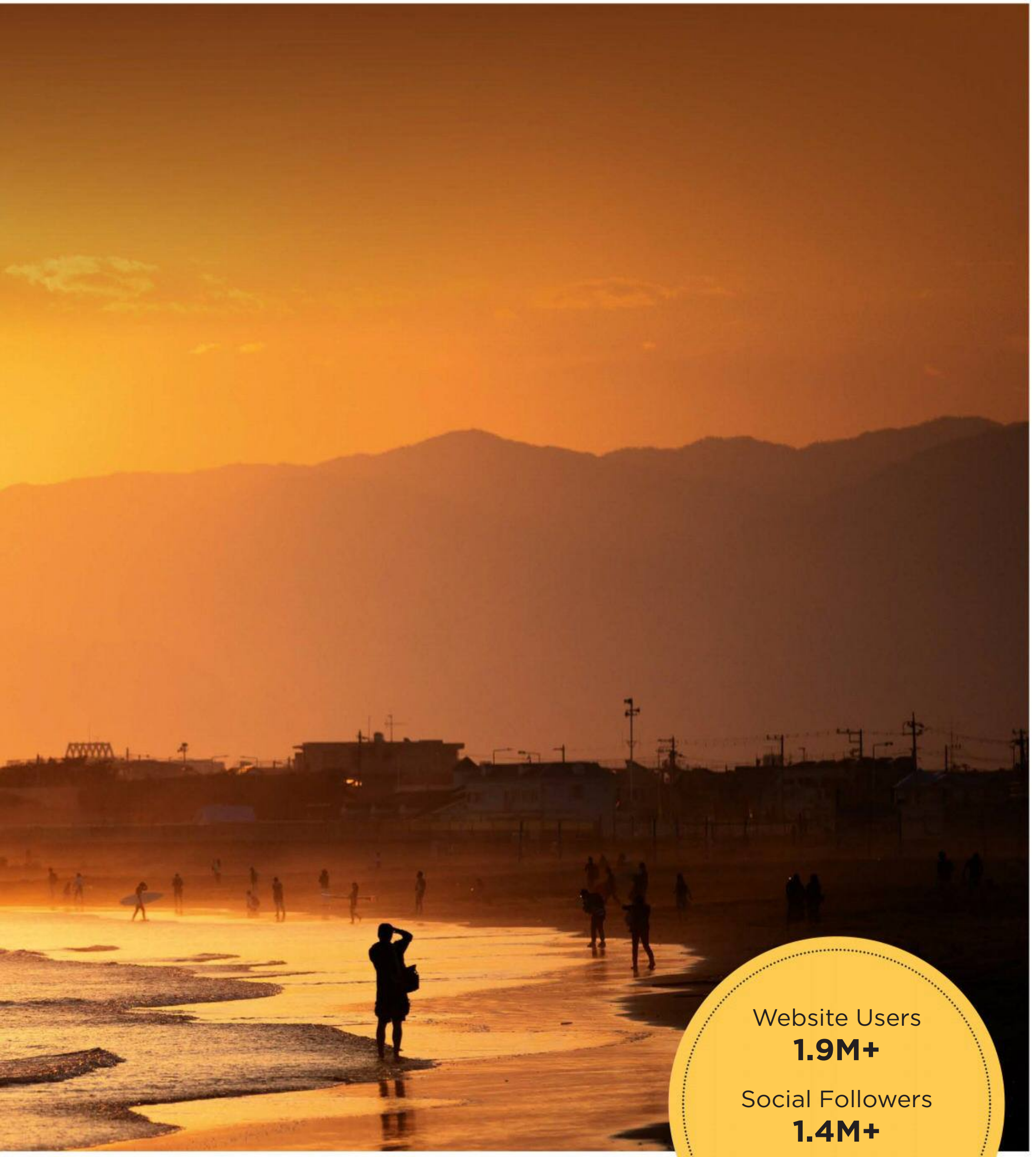
For advertising queries please contact - nupur.pandey@condenast.in



Website Users
1.9M+

Social Followers
1.4M+

All social media numbers are as of November 2021
Web users are an average of September, October and November 2021

VOGUE café

BANGKOK | BEIJING | ISTANBUL | KUALA LUMPUR | PORTO | RIYADH | SHANGHAI

Where To Buy

The products featured editorially have been ordered from the following stores. Prices and availability were checked at the time of going to press

A

Ahlem ahlemeyewear.com
Aimé Leon Dore aimeleondore.com
Alexander McQueen alexandermcqueen.com
Aliph by Gatsby gatsby.in
Anderson & Sheppard anderson-sheppard.co.uk
Anderson's anderson.it
Antar-Agni ujjawaldubey.com
Amit Aggarwal Delhi, 88606 78622
Asteri Man Mumbai, 99203 76956
Audi Mumbai, 022-66168000; Delhi, 011-4600 7300; Bengaluru, 080-4517 0000

B

Balenciaga balenciaga.com
Begg x Co beggxco.com
Bernard James bernardjames.com
Boglioli bogliolimilano.com
Bottega Veneta Mumbai, Palladium 022-6615 2291; Delhi, DLF Emporio 011-4609 8262
Brain Dead wearebraindead.com
Brunello Cucinelli Delhi, 96811 23123
Bulgari Delhi, 011-4053 8620
Burberry Mumbai, Palladium,022 4080 1994; Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4652 9850; Bengaluru, UB City, 080-4173 8825

C

Calvin Klein Underwear Mumbai, 022-2648 4794; Delhi, 011-4108 9582; Bengaluru, 080-4098 6229
Canali Mumbai, Palladium, 022-4009 8685; Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4604 0731; Bengaluru, UB City, 080-4173 8997
Cartier Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4678 8888
Celine by Hedi Slimane celine.com
Christian Louboutin Mumbai, 022-4347 1787; Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4101 7111
Chrome Hearts chromehearts.com
Common Projects commonprojects.com

D

Daniel Wellington Mumbai, Palladium, 05568 755 937; Delhi, 011-4019 7493; Bengaluru, Phoenix Marketcity, 180-0267 4707
David Yurman davidyurman.com
Dhruv Kapoor dhruvkapoor.com
Dior Men Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4600 5900
Dita dita.com
Dolce & Gabbana dolcegabbana.com
Dries Van Noten driesvannoten.be
Dsquared2 dsquared2.com

E

Emporio Armani Mumbai, Palladium, 022-4347 3211; Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4604 0783; Bengaluru, UB City, 080-4146 9333
Ermenegildo Zegna Mumbai, Palladium 022-4347 1261; Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4606 0999
Etro etro.com

F

Fendi fendi.com

G

Gas Mumbai, High Street Phoenix, 022-6749 9258; Delhi, 011-4087 0062; Bengaluru, Phoenix Marketcity, 080-6726 6085
G. Papadogamvros papadogamvros.gr
George Cleverly georgecleverly.com
Gianvito Rossi gianvitorossi.com
Givenchy givenchy.com
Grenson grenson.com
Gucci Mumbai, 022-6747 7060; Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4647 1111

H

Hermès Mumbai, 022-2271 7400; Delhi, 011-2688 5501
Homer homer.com

J

Jaquet Droz Available at ethoswatches.com
Jatin Malik jatinmalikcouture.com
Jil Sander jilsander.com
Jimmy Choo Mumbai, Palladium, 022-3027 7070; Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4660 9069; Bengaluru, UB City, 080-4173 8404
JJ Hat Center jjhatcenter.com

K

Karrtik D Delhi, 98997 71020
Kunal Rawal Mumbai, 97696 47696

L

Laulhère Available at JJ Hat Center
La Sportiva lasportiva.com
Leica leica-camera.com
Lexus Mumbai, 022 6255 6565; Delhi, 1800 300 53987, Bengaluru, 080-67702202
Linetribe_ thestudioline@gmail.com
Loewe loewe.com
Longines Mumbai, 022-6743 9853; Delhi, 011-4359 2848; Bengaluru, 080-4098 2109
Louis Vuitton Mumbai, 022-6664 4134; Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4669 0000; Bengaluru, UB City, 080-4246 0000

M

Marta Bonilla martabonilla.com
Men Of Platinum menofplatinum.com
Meraki Brothers Delhi, 96500 68075
Mercedes-Benz Mumbai, MB Auto Hangar, 022-6612 3800; Delhi, T&T Motors, 011-4005 8300; Bengaluru, Akshaya Motors, 91085 35297
Mikimoto mikimotoamerica
MoMa Design Store store.moma.org
Montblanc Mumbai, Palladium, 022-4333 9994; Delhi, 99995 03210
MSGM row.shop-msgm.com

N

Needles needles.jp
Nike Mumbai, 022-2646 1696; Delhi, 011-4150 2012; Bengaluru, 080-6726 6080
N M Design Studio Mumbai, 97695 80099
Nought One noughtone.in

O

Oliver Peoples oliverpeoples.com
Omega Mumbai, 022-6655 0351; Delhi, 011-4151 3255; Bengaluru, 080-4098 2106
Outhouse Mumbai, 77100 08481; Delhi, 74281 43444

P

Palm Angels palmangels.com
Paul Smith Mumbai, Palladium, 022-4006 5089; Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4604 0734; Bengaluru, UB City, 080-4173 8882
Philocaly Delhi, 99998 90168
Pirelli pirelli.com
Polo Ralph Lauren Available at The Collective
Prada prada.com

R

Rado Mumbai, 022-6743 9856; Delhi, 011-4357 5253; Bengaluru, UB City, 080-4098 2107
Ralph Lauren Delhi, 011-26888090
Ray-Ban ray-ban.com
Rick Owens rickowens.eu
Rimowa rimowa.com
Rolex Mumbai, DiA, 022-2204 2299; Delhi, Kapoor Watch Co, 011-4134 5678; Bengaluru, 080-2211 3976
Rowing Blazers rowingblazers.com

S

Sacai sacai.jp
S&N by Shantanu & Nikhil shantanunikhil.com
Saint Laurent by Anthony Vaccarello Delhi, The Chanakya, 78771 23123
Salvatore Ferragamo Mumbai, 022-3062 1018; Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4660 9084; Bengaluru, UB City, 080-4302 0456
Sarah & Sandeep Mumbai, 022-2651 1738
Satya Paul Delhi, 011-4604 0721; Mumbai, 85914 04161; Bangalore
Séfr www.sefr-online.com
Shay Jewelry shayjewelry.com
Stüssy stussy.com
Supreme supremenewyork.com

T

TAG Heuer Mumbai, 022-3060 2001; Delhi, 98711 98885; Bengaluru, 080- 4098 2109
Tesla Motors tesla.com The Collective Mumbai, Palladium, 022-4023 4414; Delhi, 011-4087 0544; Bengaluru, UB City, 080-4120 7331
The Elder Statesman elder-statesman.com
The Row therow.com
Thom Browne thombrowne.com
Tiffany & Co. tiffany.com
Tod's Mumbai, Palladium, 022-4242 1818, Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4666 2700
Tom Ford Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4103 3059

V

Valentino valentino.com
Versace versace.com
Volkswagen Mumbai, 91671 09317; Delhi, 011-4534 0002; Bengaluru, 96866 01249

W

W. Kleinberg wkleinberg.com
Worth & Worth hatshop.com

Y

Ystudio ystudiostyle.com

Z

Z Zegna Mumbai, Palladium, 022-4347 1263; Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4606 0999

TOP GQ SHELF

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A Connoisseurs Choice

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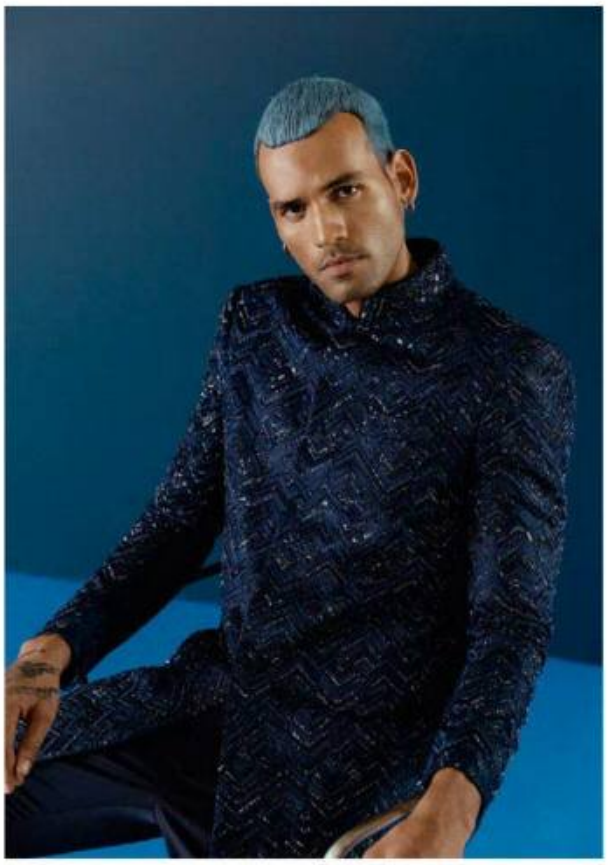
- **Available for ₹6,270 in Delhi, ₹10,500 in Bangalore and ₹11,550 in Mumbai**



Everything Dapper ↑

Designer Duo Vrinda Sachdev and Gurinder Singh's creation 'QBIK' is all things unique with the refreshing combination of Indian traditional crafts with avant garde lines. Their latest is a revamped, cool collection of the signature pieces by Qbik man. Think smart tuxedos, bespoke tailoring and much more with this collection. A new narrative for their menswear, this makes for a stylish look for all the dapper men out there!

- ***For more details, please visit qbik.in or follow @qbikofficial on Instagram***

A Race With Time →

Elevate your watch arsenal with Tag Heuer's latest horological wonder. A must have for watch connoisseurs, TAG Heuer has recently launched a new generation of their famous TAG Heuer Carrera Three Hands. A major inspiration for these watches have been the motor racing heritage that the brand is known for. These watches are all things pure and fearless and definitely make for the most elegant watches in the famous TAG Heuer portfolio.

- ***For more information, please visit tagheuer.com***

A Match For Your Watch ↑

Lapis Bard's Conrad Leather Watch Case is an absolute must have for all the horophiles out there. This is designed after Da Vinci's sfumato technique that makes for a sublime dual tone finish. It also has microsuede pillows to keep your beloved watches in perfect condition while also allowing you to admire them through that see-through window at the top. Sounds like the perfect partner for the horologist in you!

- **₹9,950.** ***For more information, visit lapisbard.com/collections/accessories/products/conrad-dual-tone-watch-case***

← An Essential For Sure

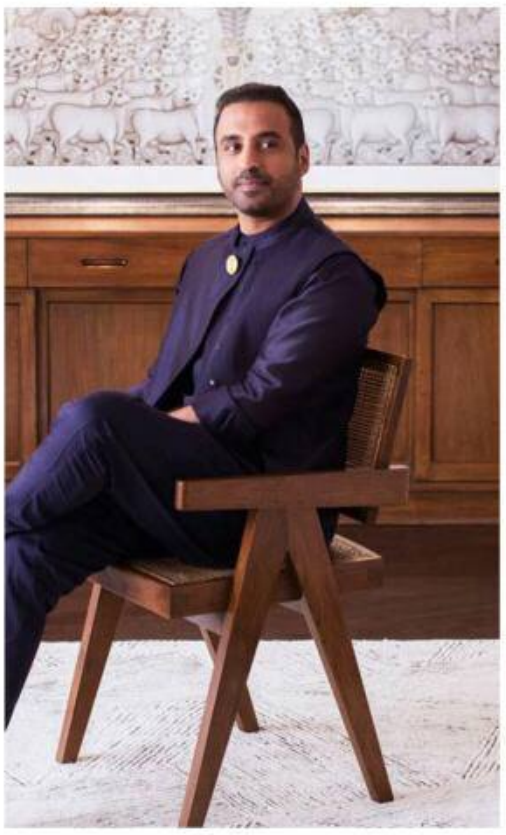
Forest Essentials announces their newest foray into international markets with Europe's premium online beauty retailer, Lookfantastic.com. Their exceptional products range from Hair Care, Body Care, Facial Care, Men's Collection, Gifting range, Soundarya collection and much more! The signature collections they offer there include Madurai Jasmine & Mogra, Kashmiri Nargis and much more! With Ayurveda gaining more of a footing in the global platform, Forest Essentials' launch into the U.K. market is sure to be a hit. Look out for your favourite products on your next visit to the UK!

- ***For more information, visit forestessentials.co.uk or follow @forestessentials_uk on Instagram***

The One and Only →

A single malt loved by one and all, The Singleton is made for everyone. Every sip is a feat of pure enjoyment with its perfectly balanced rich tones. It's made in the iconic Glendullan distillery with a commitment to creating the perfect taste. A drink made solely to indulge your taste, this malt is made for those who enjoy life. The Singleton is to toast the best moments of your life with!

- ***For more information, follow @singletonindiaofficial on Instagram***



A True Artist

Artist Jai Khanna grew up in the spiritual presence of Shrinath Ji gaining him a very personal and experiential understanding of God. This is reflected beautifully in his art. His magnificent creations which are an amalgamation of unique patterns, symbols and colours are exhibited vastly with some being featured in Kiran Nadar museum as well. His Forest series is a sight to behold with its depiction of the visions of a dream in which a solitary devotee wanders about a dense forest with Krishna giving darshana only to him. In "The Dreams of my Divine", every piece of art celebrates various different bhavams capturing a myriad of moods through different festivities.

For more information, follow @jaikhanna_krishnavillas on Instagram

A Watch Wonder

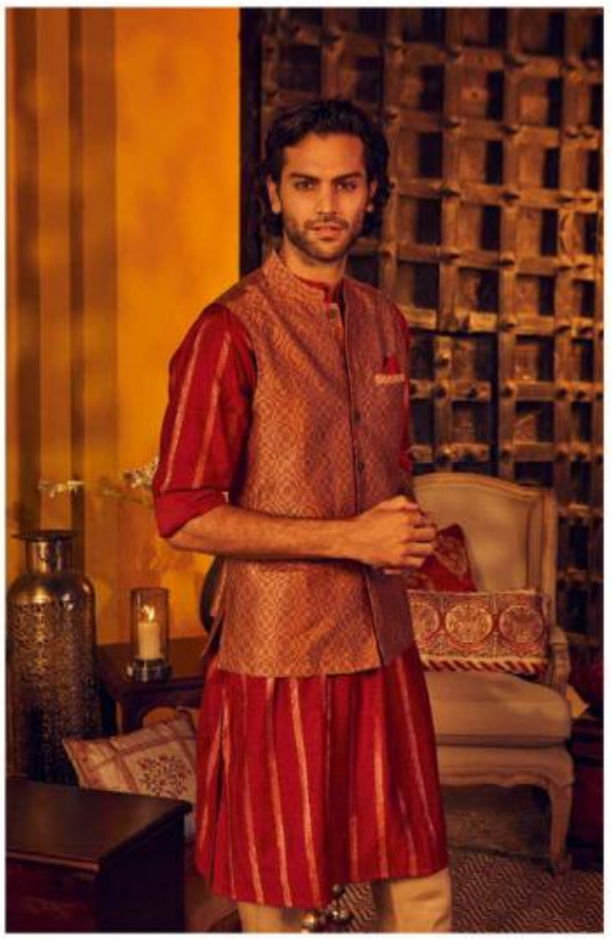
Always a class apart, Daniel Wellington has done it again with their first ever automatic watch. Their new Iconic Link Automatic is a wonder watch with incredible features like a date display with a magnifying bubble, scratch-resistant sapphire crystal on the back and front. A self-winding watch powered by the motion of your own wrist — it simply cannot get better than that! What are you waiting for? Go make the purchase today!

₹29,999

Indeed a Fabulous India

In anticipation of the upcoming wedding season, Fabindia now introduces it's Festive Collection. An array of breathtaking apparel awaits you with their coordinated sets, lehengas, cot—silk weaves, kurtas and not to mention their stunning jewellery. This collection encapsulates in it all the emotions of hope, merriment and effortless joy— something that we all need at the end of this bleak year. So, here's your chance to adorn yourself in a stunning attire and have some good fun.

For more information, follow @fabindiaofficial on Instagram



The Best Partner

With yet another brilliant bottle to add to your collection, the ever so iconic Johnnie Walker introduces Gold Reserve in collaboration with maestros Abu Jani and Sandeep Khosla. This blend has just the perfect taste of smooth sweetness with notes of honey and vanilla that make it a perfect partner for the occasions of note. Elevate your upcoming events to perfection with this brilliant Gold Reserve in it's newest collaboration.

For more information, visit socialgoat.in/JohnnieWalkerPourOfGold

Fly High

Now that travelling is back on the tables, make the experience incredible with Vistara's Purple Ticket. These incredible gift cards allow you to shower your loved ones with the amazing gift of travel! You can even gift them personalized Purple Tickets on any date with denomination values ranging from INR 250 to INR 20, 000. These can be redeemed for Vistara flights ensuring you the best travel experience ever.

For more information, visit giftcards.airvistara.com

The Blend of Your Dreams ↑

The collaboration of Distell Group and Aspri Spirits Pvt Ltd has seen the introduction of brilliant brands like Amarula Fruit Cream Liqueur, Nederburg and Two Oceans wines. Good news for us is that they've decided to come together once again by tapping into India's fastest growing scotch whiskey with Scottish Leader- the award winning blend which is a hot favourite around the globe. If that's not something to toast to, we don't know what is!

For more information, follow @scottishleaderin on Instagram

Luxury Like No Other ↑

There's nothing like coming back home and unwinding in a luxurious bathtub. This is something Artize understands with clarity which is why they've introduced the exceptionally beautiful Tiara Freestanding Bathtub in their Wellness Range. Think a fluid monolithic bathtub with an elevated look equipped with superior lumbar support, and an integrated drain and overflow system. That's Tiara Freestanding Bathtub for you. Everyone deserves a good, long, calming bath to take away all your stress in their lives and Artize gives you exactly that with this state-of-the-art product.

For more information, visit artize.com

A New Gifting Tradition ↑

Treat yourself along with a loved one this festive season! Kama Ayurveda is set to make the holidays a little more special with their special-edition gift boxes that serve to be thoughtful gestures to say that you care. Curated to present the goodness of pure, authentic ingredients — the haircare and skincare boxes reveal an array of wellness products, from nourishing hair oils and moisturising conditioners to face scrubs and serums that rejuvenate your skin — truly a star of the season.

For more information, visit kamaayurveda.com

← As Elegant as Platinum

Men of Platinum lies in the conjunction of elegance, versatility, strength and a character of the rarest acumen. These are reflected in their latest collection which contains in them a vast range of stunning pieces that elevate the style of any man who wears them. The Platinum Ring by Men of Platinum is their latest innovation. It has clean lines, distinctive emblems and aerodynamic elements.Created with durable platinum that reflects the strength of its wearer, this Platinum Ring is a complete class apart.

For more information visit menofplatinum.com or follow @menofplatinum on Instagram

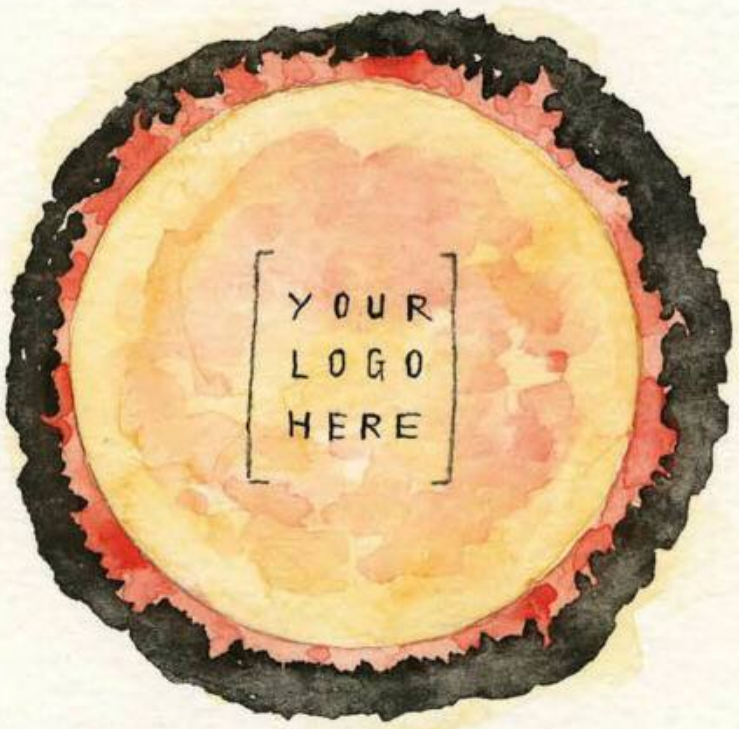
Health is Wealth →

Pay special attention to your body's needs with WLTH, a fitting acronym for We Love To Heal. Up your self-care game with their scientifically formulated, adaptogenic herbal supplements that make the perfect addition to your self-care rituals. Their range consists of sustainably sourced, 100% vegan products that provide you with mental, physical, emotional and energetic lifestyle balance, focusing on healing different aspects of your health to heal you completely from inside out.

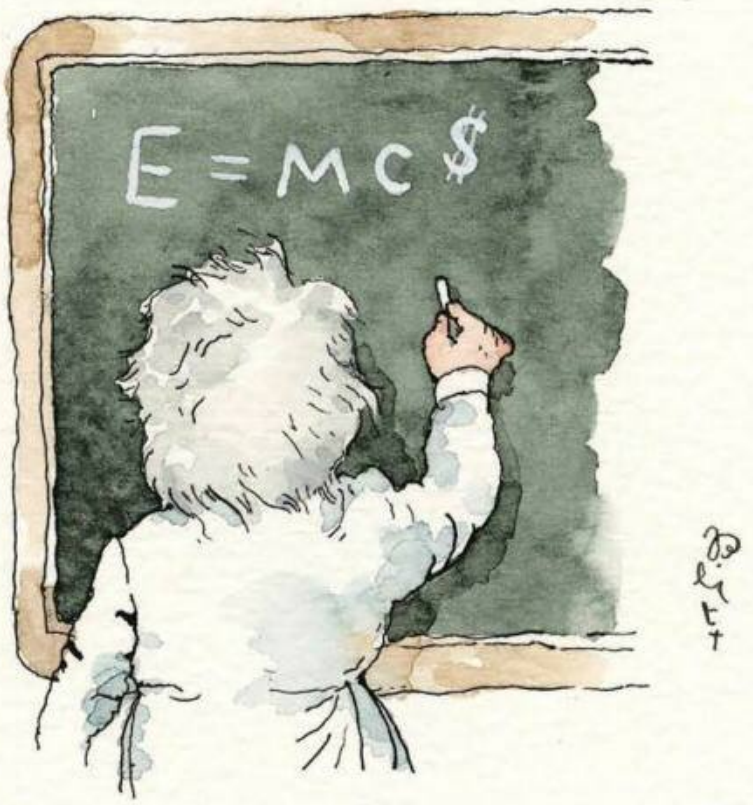
For more information, visit wlth.in

ÉLITISM ON A MASSIVE SCALE

GATED GALAXIES



NAMING RIGHTS TO THE SUN



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